

THE UK'S BIGGEST AND BEST SELLING NINTENDO MAGAZINE

# Nintendo®

## OFFICIAL MAGAZINE



# MARIO KART™

## —Double Dash!!™

**Red Shells! Bananas! Chain Chomps! AWESOME!**  
Your OFFICIAL 20-page blowout





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GAME BOY ADVANCE™

PlayStation 2

PC CD-ROM

NEW LINE CINEMA



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**MARIOKART**  
Double Dash!!



YOU'VE MOSTLY BEEN BUYING...

# F-Zero GX

Like a cyclone whipping its way into the homes of thousands, the ultra-fast racer of the future, *F-Zero GX*, has stormed to the top of your shopping lists and firmly implanted itself into GameCubes the length and breadth of the nation.

With its crazy blend of white-hot pedal to the metal action and superb Story mode chock full of twists and turns it's no wonder that sales are soaring. It's also exclusive to GameCube. You just can't get that quality anywhere else.

The Official UK weekly leisure software charts (©2003 EISPA Ltd (www.eispa.com), compiled by ChartTrack

## GAMECUBE SALES CHART

It's nearly Christmas and the charts are filling with new titles. *F-Zero GX* just pips *FIFA* and *Joe* to top spot.

TITLE	PUBLISHER
1 <i>F-Zero GX</i>	Nintendo
2 <i>FIFA 2004</i>	EA
3 <i>Viewtiful Joe</i>	Capcom
4 <i>The Simpsons Hit &amp; Run</i>	Vivendi
5 <i>Soul Calibur II</i>	Nintendo
6 <i>Worms 3D</i>	Sega
7 <i>SSX 3</i>	EA
8 <i>Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg</i>	Sega
9 <i>Finding Nemo</i>	THQ
10 <i>The Wind Waker</i>	Nintendo

## GAME BOY ADVANCE CHART

It's a sad day when a movie licence knocks *Mario Bros.* 3 into second spot. But that's big business for you, kids!

TITLE	PUBLISHER
1 <i>Finding Nemo</i>	THQ
2 <i>Super Mario Advance 4</i>	Nintendo
3 <i>Pokémon Ruby</i>	Nintendo
4 <i>Pokémon Sapphire</i>	Nintendo
5 <i>Yu Gi Oh! Worldwide Edition</i>	Konami
6 <i>Final Fantasy Tactics Advance</i>	Nintendo
7 <i>Scooby Doo and the Cyber Chase</i>	THQ
8 <i>Sonic Advance 2</i>	Sega
9 <i>Monsters, Inc.</i>	THQ
10 <i>Advance Wars 2</i>	Nintendo



# Welcome

# Welcome to *NOM UK*



While we've been working on this month's *NOM UK* all this crazy stuff happened...

- 0** of us had a car crash after playing *Double Dash*
- 1** of us dreamt about Mushroom Bridge
- 1** of us declared the Chain Chomp to be the best weapon ever
- 2** radio-controlled Mario Karts became our toys of the month
- 3** of us claimed *Double Dash* to be the game of the year
- 21** races took place before I worked out the turbo start
- 73** *Double Dash* races took place
- 73** times Mark lost
- 73** times Mark stormed out of the games room
- 73** times Mark carried on anyway

Enjoy the mag!

*Tim Street*

Tim Street, Editor

## Nintendo®

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(and their favourite Mario Kart racer)

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Calls cost 50p per minute. Calls last two minutes. Text entries cost £1.00 per entry. Please get permission from the bill payer before calling. *Nintendo Official Magazine UK* and the companies providing prizes accept no liability for injuries or damage sustained while using prizes.

All entries for the competitions in *NOM UK* 135 must be received by 11/12/03 to qualify. The winner will receive the stated prize from the competition they have entered. If, for any reason beyond the promoter's control, it is not possible to provide the stated prize, the promoter reserves the right to award an alternative prize of no lesser value.

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The promoter excludes responsibility for applications that are lost/delayed/incomplete.

### ANSWERS TO THE ROCK-HARD QUIZ, P146

- 1) Cheep-Cheep Island - Mario Kart Super Circuit 2) Yoshi Desert - Mario Kart 64
- 2) Koopa Troopa Beach - Mario Kart 64 3) Luigi Circuit - Mario Kart Super Circuit
- 3) Snow Land - Mario Kart Super Circuit 4) Royal Raceway - Mario Kart 64
- 4) Yoshi Valley - Mario Kart 64 5) Baby Park 1 - Mario Kart Super Circuit
- 5) Sunset Wilds - Mario Kart Super Circuit 6) Ghost Valley 2 - Super Mario Kart
- 6) Koopa Troopa Beach - Mario Kart Super Circuit 7) Yoshi Valley - Mario Kart 64
- 7) Koopa Troopa Beach - Mario Kart Super Circuit 8) Luigi Circuit - Mario Kart Super Circuit
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- 19) Koopa Troopa Beach - Mario Kart Super Circuit 20) Luigi Circuit - Mario Kart Super Circuit



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FACTOR 5





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December 2003



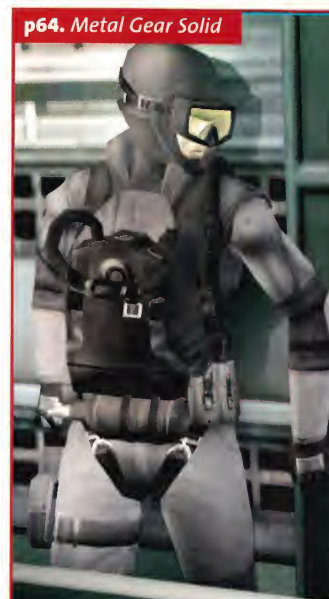
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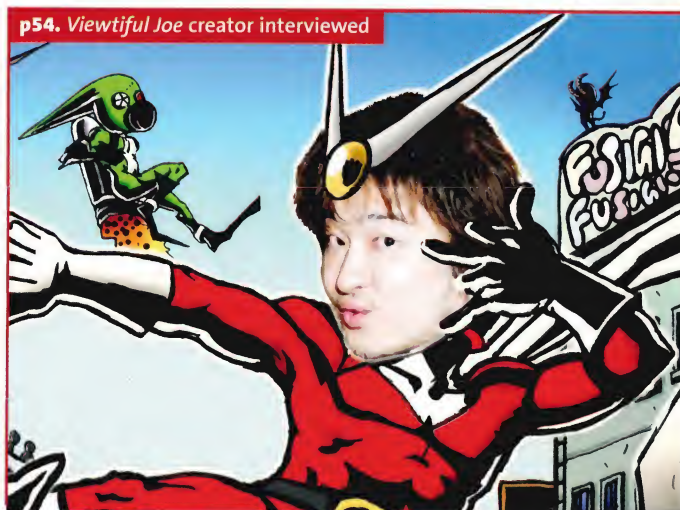
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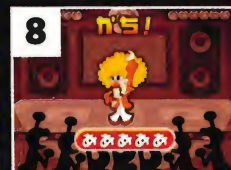
Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

p010



## 10 Things we didn't know last month...

**1** A Red Shell causes the same reaction it always did (Mario Kart: Double Dash, p10) **2** We'd still need to read the back of the players' shirts to know who they were (FIFA 2004, p88) **3** The Simpsons would break their bad-game voodoo curse (The Simpsons: Hit & Run, p110) **4** Tactics games suck the time straight out of your life (Final Fantasy Tactics Advance, p104) **5** Games are worse than films... sometimes (The Return of the King, p84) **6** The streets of LA do not a GTA-beater make (True Crime, p60) **7** Neversoft can still reinvent 'boarding games (Tony Hawk's Underground, p80) **8** Wario's party is a lot more fun than Mario's (Made in Wario, p58) **9** 2D can be a lot better than 3D (Worms 3D, p98) **10** Games reviews used to look awful (Celebrate Nintendo, p30)



## Reviews

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**"If you want a racer with the stamp of Nintendo quality plastered all over it get a copy of *Double Dash!!*"**

# Mario Kart Double Dash!!

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Nintendo  
Web: [www.mariokart.com](http://www.mariokart.com)  
Players: 1-16  
Memory: 5 blocks

Out  
Now

**Eat that Red Shell! Get outta my way, Peach! Why do I keep getting bloody bananas!? Well, start your engines and stand well back, 'cos the karting king is back on the road.**





# art



► You're second. It's the final lap, Mario and Luigi are right behind, but you've got a Green Shell. Bowser and sprog are in front. It's the last corner. You power slide perfectly and scream at the TV as your Shell smashes into the back of the Koopa king, "Have that in your face!" The finish is just feet away... come on, come on my beauties. What the hell? Mazza's just bashed you with a Red Shell, Peach and Daisy blast past and you're a sorry third. ARGH! I HATE THIS GAME! And this time there are no continues. Either you quit and begin the Cup all over again, or you just have to take it on the chin. This is *Mario Kart* the way you like it, Nintendo fan, and believe us it feels great to have one of the all-time Nintendo classics back.



# On the grid

Eight karts, 16 stars – here's the starting line-up.



Fact: This is the biggest *Mario Kart* line-up ever. We're not even joking with you. No fewer than 16 racers have been plucked from the Nintendo archives and you've got to choose two to make up your perfect team.

The strategy for older *Mario Kart* games relied heavily on each individual character's

abilities: Mario and Luigi were good all-rounders; Yoshi and Peach had sweet acceleration; Toad was the racer of choice; and so on.

Now it's the karts that determine your top speed, acceleration and weight, and there are some great creations available, including Donkey

Kong's barrel on wheels, Wario's purple cadillac and Baby Mario's pram. Stats are rated from two to five stars and you get to choose the kart, although it's limited by which characters you've picked. Changing drivers during a race won't affect the stats either, but there are more vehicles to unlock as you start winning the Cups...

## Peach and Daisy



Don't think for one minute that Peach's kart is for girls 'cos this love buggy has sweet acceleration.



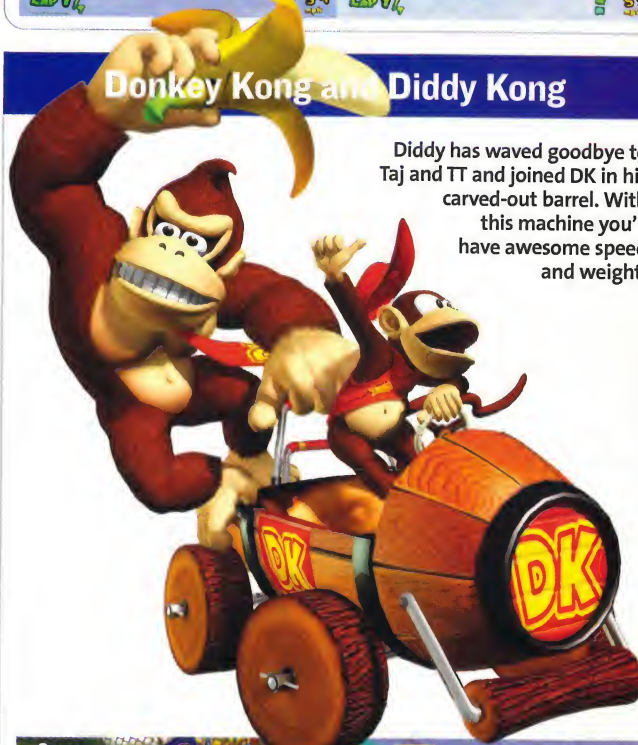
## Yoshi and Birdo

C'mon, of course you love this one! A Yoshi face on wheels that's super quick off the start line.



## Donkey Kong and Diddy Kong

Diddy has waved goodbye to Taj and TT and joined DK in his carved-out barrel. With this machine you'll have awesome speed and weight.





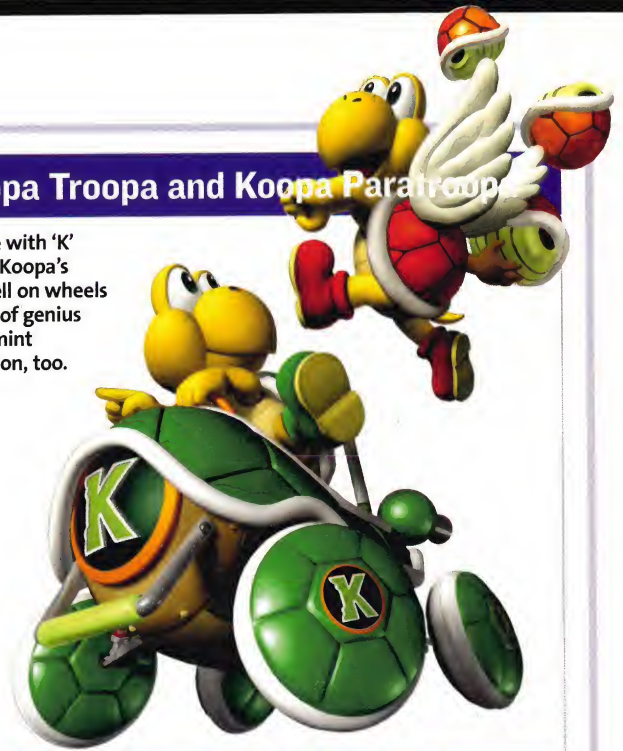
## Baby Mario and Baby Luigi

Back from Yoshi's Island, the babies live life in the fast lane using their souped-up pram. Pick this and you'll have the best acceleration.



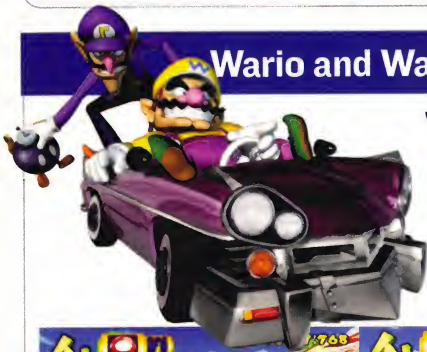
## Koopa Troopa and Koopa Paratroopa

Complete with 'K' hubcaps, Koopa's green shell on wheels is a work of genius and has mint acceleration, too.



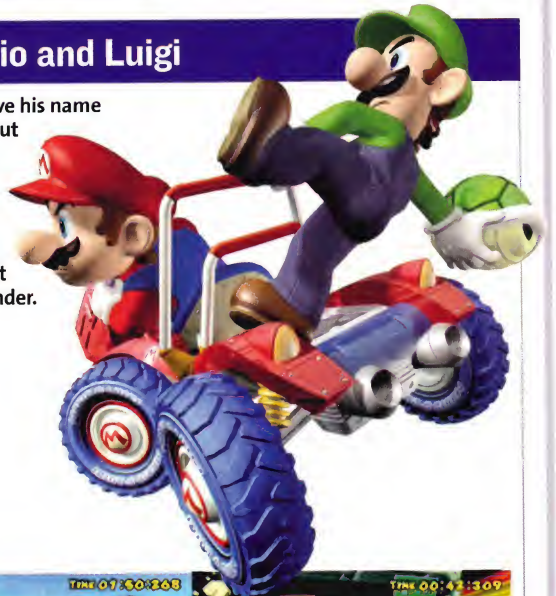
## Wario and Waluigi

Wario's mean cadillac looks the business and just like DK's barrel it has excellent speed and weight.



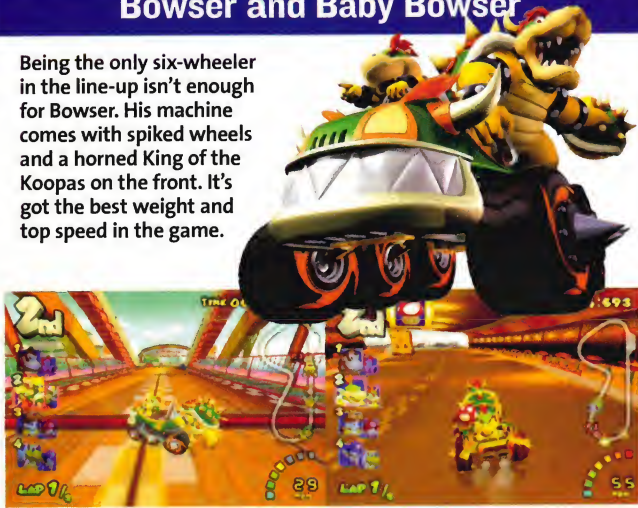
## Mario and Luigi

Mario may have his name in the game, but the plumber's buggy (complete with 'M' hubcaps) is once again just a solid all-rounder.



## Bowser and Baby Bowser

Being the only six-wheeler in the line-up isn't enough for Bowser. His machine comes with spiked wheels and a horned King of the Koopas on the front. It's got the best weight and top speed in the game.





# Don't you play tennis?

Mario's other jobs in full.

■ Karting isn't the only thing Mario's done in his spare time y'know – Nintendo's main man has taken part in tons of other stuff. Here's a few things the old boy has been enjoying during his gaming career...

## BASKETBALL



## GOLF



## TENNIS



## DOC



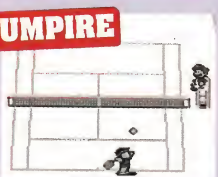
## REF



## DRIVER



## UMPIRE



## ARTIST



» Mario Kart has been the top racer ever since it blasted onto the Super NES back in '92. In those halcyon days, the first issue of *Nintendo Magazine System* gave it 92% and if you slobbered over that review then you joined a nine-year-old Mike and 16-year-old Tim. We couldn't resist mastering the Ghost

Valley 1 jump, shaving seconds off our Rainbow Road time or perfecting the broken bridge jump in Donut Plains 3.

Even in the world of 3D with the likes of *Burnout*, *Super Mario Kart's* Mode 7 and sensation of speed still makes it stand up over ten years on. My cart even has a Rainbow Road time that can't be cracked

after eight years of trying (1'32"85, for anyone who wants to give it a go).

Some would say that it even out-performed *Mario Kart 64* which divided the Nintendo nation five years after the original. But now *Double Dash* is here and you can put any worries to rest. This ranks up there alongside *Super Mario Kart* and slams *MK64* right

**"You'll spend ages finding every short cut and quirky Nintendo moment."**



■ Diddy picks the fleas out of Mario's back hair – that's real friendship, people



■ Sixth!? It must be all that extra weight you're carrying





# The Karting Family Tree

NOM UK brings you the greatest karting family tree... ever!



## STREET RACER

The first clone was a 16-bit belter that allowed up to four players at once using a Multitap.

## MARIO KART 64

Kamek was in an early shot, but got dumped for Wario, and the Blue Shell made its first appearance here!

## SOUTH PARK RALLY

Great handling

and bad language in Acclaim's cartoon spin-off.

## DIDDY KONG RACING

Was it better than MK64? Was it hell, but Rare's kart game nearly claimed the glory.

## MICKY'S SPEEDWAY USA

This Rare racer saw you battle it out with Goofy

and Donald all over the USA.

## LEGO RACERS

A poor man's attempt to rival Diddy and Mario on the N64.

## MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

The GBA's finest racer had eight characters, loads of trophies and Super NES tracks to unlock.

## MICKY'S SPEEDWAY USA

In Rare's Mickey racer on GBC you could switch from kart to boat.

## KONAMI KRAZY RACERS

Another MK clone, but this is one of GBA's best racers.

## GADGET RACERS

There are 40 tracks and a wicked four-player link-up

mode, but the controls are iffy.

## INSPECTOR GADGET RACING

One of the slowest racers you'll ever play, this is the black sheep of the karting family.

## TOY STORY RACER

A terrible-looking, shameless cash-in, but it did try to create 3D on the good-old GBC.

## SHREK SWAMP KART SPEEDWAY

This is a long way from Super Circuit. In fact it nearly sits at the back of the GBA karting pack.

## MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH

See you later MK64! This is up there with SMK for team play, unlockables and a totally mint multiplayer mode.







# Every single track

## Mushroom Cup

### LUIGI CIRCUIT



No sooner do you start than you'll boost and have to decide whether to get the double item box on the short cut as well as facing the danger of the Chain Chomp!



It's decision time. Do you need an item or can you make do and speed around on the bank's boosts?

### PEACH BEACH



Parts of Isle Delfino come alive in *Double Dash*. You can dodge the duck-like enemies on the beach or hit the ramp for items. Just don't sink in the deep, blue water.



You'll even see Daisy's Cruiser out at sea (which you'll race in Flower Cup) and give Pianta and Noki a treat as you bomb past them on the way to the finish line.

### BABY PARK



Tucked away in Pinna Park is this simple oval course – seven fast and furious laps instead of the usual three and it's all raced under a massive roller coaster.



Just make sure you master the art of the early power slide for each corner and get ready to dodge those dropped items.

### DRY DRY DESERT



This is the hardest track on Mushroom Cup, with hairpin turns to contend with and a sandstorm that loves to sweep in and scoop you up.



Watch out for this fella, because if you get too close to the draining sand you'll slide to your doom and get chewed up. CRUNCH!!

## Flower Cup

### MUSHROOM BRIDGE



Now things start to hot up. This track sees you hurtling around a town of mushroom huts, across a clone of Sydney Harbour Bridge and through a winding tunnel.



The road is littered with all manner of Mushroom Kingdom traffic, from karts that release mushrooms when bumped to giant Wigglers on wheels.

### MARIO CIRCUIT



The plumber's track is a rough ride complete with high-speed turns and bridges – a definite shift from the tarmac traditions of Mario Circuit 1 in *SMK*.



Some of Mario's deadliest enemies also come out of hiding here with Goombas that must be dodged and Piranha Plants that sniff out prey along the trackside.

### DAISY CRUISER

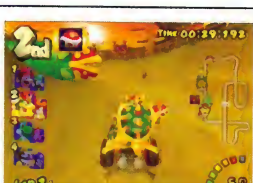


Contending with other drivers is one thing, but battling with the high sea is hard work as it causes tables and item boxes to slide from side to side.



Look out for hanging life-rings – if a rival batters one in front of you the force of the swing will see it smash back in your face.

### WALUIGI STADIUM



It's a bit of a Wario Stadium rip off, but there are some wicked moments. Giant metallic Piranha Plants slide in and out of pipes and Hotheads form windmills.



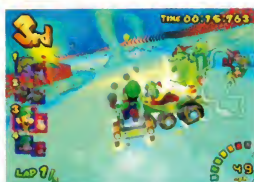
Don't forget to keep an eye out for the stadium's big screen as you'll even see your team being filmed as you hack around the course.



Four Cups, 16 tracks, all on show, right here. Now, bathe your greedy little race-face in their glory...

## Star Cup

### SHERBET LAND



Double Dash's only spin around an ice world is fraught with danger as you hit caves at high speed and must weave past ice columns supporting the roof.



Other hazards here include skating Red and Blue Shy Guys and ice blocks that'll freeze you on impact – so watch where you drive.

### MUSHROOM CITY



Hang on a sec, doesn't this look a little like Toad's Turnpike? Well kinda. But the road forks now so you can take multiple routes through the city.



Mushroom karts help you out again, but the Wigglers are a pain in the ass. There are also Bob-ombs on wheels that'll send you sky high if you hit them.

### YOSHI CIRCUIT



This is one of the best tracks in the game – it's shaped like Yoshi! Just check out the tunnel that goes under his fingers and brown hills that look like his boots!



Be prepared to use your shoulder buttons, too. This track has two serious hairpin turns to get round in one piece. One's even on the edge of a massive cliff.

### DK MOUNTAIN



As you climb to the top a DK barrel will blast you across a huge drop at 195mph. You won't feel much difference, but if you're using Peach you may see right up her dress!



As you hurtle to the bottom again, boulders crash down just as you're about to power slide around the hairpins. A rickety bridge could even throw you into a ravine.

## Special Cup

### WARIO COLOSSEUM



Probably more at home in *F-Zero GX*, this roller coaster ride is the kind of track that'll make you love *Mario Kart*. It's packed with drops and wicked jumps.



Lakitu may also pop up and winch you back onto the course as many sweeping corners are unfenced, so time your power slides just right.

### DINO DINO JUNGLE



There are ice, beach and stadium tracks, now it's the turn of *Jurassic Park*. It comes complete with rickety bridges and dinosaurs that stomp around the pick-ups.



Look out for the cracks in the earth, too, as water spouts blast you hundreds of feet into the air – you don't want to be sitting on the top of one of them when it blows!

### BOWSER'S CASTLE



Another *Mario Kart* staple is the Koopa king's domain and yet again he's brought his vicious Thwomps along to crush you and lakes of lava to sizzle your ass.



A giant stone Bowser will even shoot fire at you, and in one room you'll have to squeeze between searing fireballs to reach the other side unscathed.

### RAINBOW ROAD



No *Mario Kart* game would be complete without this to finish off with and just as always, it's a psychedelic world, this time twisting and turning high above a city.



Clouds reflect in the multicoloured track, speed boosts dry your eyes up and a huge pipe will soar you up hundreds of feet before you blast out of the top.





>>> to the back with a Red Shell right up the jacky.

Oh yes *Mario Kart*, the sweetest disc of gaming goodness, you are the reason why we stay up all night trying to crack Special Cup 150cc and why friends are lost in Battle mode. You are the one steaming across the finish line just in time for Christmas, but warn granny that the air will be turning bluer than Sonic's jewels when you get this game on. *Super Circuit* on Game Boy Advance was wicked, but you've been waiting for a home console version of *Mario Kart* for six and a half long years – and now it's finally here.

Charles Martinez, the man behind the Mario voice, kicks off with a big, fat celebratory NIIIIIIINTENDO! and from then on it's quality presentation all the way to the end of the Rainbow Road (come on you knew it was in there!).

Any lingering doubts that you may have harboured since ECTS over *Double Dash*'s potential will be swept away. As we said then, Nintendo's updated version blew away the game that was shown at E3 back in May. Okay, 50cc left us concerned for the first day's play as we wondered whether *Double Dash* was all it was cracked up to be, but then that's always been the nature of the first few races.

You aren't going to hurtle along, but the pace is enough to get you used to the handling of the new karts, learn every corner and find every short cut. Just don't jump straight into 150cc. It's very tempting, but you'll have as much chance of surviving as a one-winged Arwing against Andross. In fact, even getting gold on 150cc after days of battling with Bowser isn't a dead cert as you'll have your work cut out.



■ Tailgating is prohibited by Mushroom Kingdom law

■ Look at that stash of Shells! Someone's really gonna feel the pain

## Eat these, Bowser!

Shells, Mushrooms and Bananas all explained...



### Red Shell

One of the greatest Nintendo weapons of all time. It homes in once fired and flies around corners. It doesn't stun opponents for very long, though.



### Green Shell

These don't home in, but they will bounce off walls and fencing until they hit someone or fall through a gap in the track. They come in singles and triples.



### Blue Shell

Now with added wings! The Blue Shell flies through the air and smashes into the race leader. Very handy. Too easy to get in LAN mode, though.



### Banana

The classic slippery customer only comes in single peels, but can cause havoc if dumped on wicked corners or narrow stretches of the track.



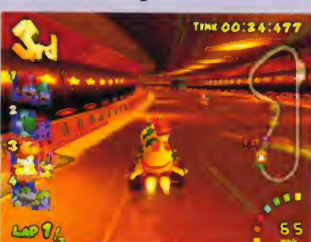
### Star

Stuck at the back? Want to power your way through the pack? Then the Star item is a must-have for you, my friend. It can save your blushes if you're having a mare.



### Lightning

One of the most annoying items to be hit with, the Lightning Bolt will shrink you to the size of a pea. Just avoid the git who did it or you'll get squashed.



### Mushroom

Like the Green Shells you can get these in singles or triples and one blast will see your speed top 65mph. Try not to use them when facing a wall.



### Fake Box

Even harder to spot than last time, the fake power-up boxes are tinted red and therefore perfect for dumping amongst the real item boxes. Mwa-ha-ha!



**"The air will be bluer than Sonic's jewels when you play."**



■ Yoshi suffers the indignity of riding shotgun with Birdo



■ Are the babies heading for a fiery grave? Probably not, it's not that kind of game



■ Who's supposed to be driving here?! Get back in the kart!



## How to... get a turbo in one second

**Wait for the lights and hit the gas... at the right time, obviously.**

■ Getting the hang of the elusive speed start took us a while, but it's essential to being a top karter. Follow our four-step guide though and you'll soon be powering away from the other racers. However, more often than not you'll be overtaken by one of the blighters, so don't swerve too much or you could collide with another racing team and find yourself spinning out at the back. Here's how to break away from Birdo and Co. with a class-A flying start...



Lakitu swings in with the start lights swinging from his fishing rod. Now the race is about to begin!



Even as the countdown begins you don't have to hit the gas. That comes right at the very end.



As soon as the fourth starting beep has died, hit the gas and the weapon thrower on your team will rocket away with the kart.



Now you're off and soaring over 40mph in just a second. Just avoid anyone coming up on either side of you.







## “Green Shells bounce around and Mushrooms litter the track from previous collisions.”

» Even getting double figures is now a much harder task as points are graded all the way down to seventh place. So even getting a chink of daylight from another team is even harder. All that means is you'll need to shave seconds off corners, know where power-ups are and make sure no weapons are wasted.

Throwing away weapons is easier said than done. You can throw any weapons behind you

(except for the Blue Winged Shell) but you can't hold them behind you and use them as barriers to block any homers. Your timing and aim must now be precise and, as there are no feathers either, you've got to keep one eye on the bottom of the screen to warn you of incoming Chain Chomps, Shells and Eggs.

As *Mario Kart* games go the pace from 100cc onwards is

relentless – just how you like it. You'll curse every cock-up and cheer every victory as you hammer the bends and slipstream your opponents, only to see yourself misjudge a corner and go diving into the surf below or get gobbled up by a starving Piranha Plant. It's gripping stuff and will have you desperate to get out of last place, anxious when in the lead and leave you in a rage as you slam into a lorry just as you were about to nip in and steal the karting crown.

The relentless gameplay is there for all to see in Baby Park, Mushroom Cup's third track and

the simplest in the game. Not simplest to win, but just by its layout you'd think Mr Miyamoto had just got out his Scalextric set and said to the boys: 'I'm stroong! Just do it like this!'. Think NASCAR oval without the raised, sweeping bends and you've got one of the most manic courses in the game. Green Shells bounce around, Mushrooms litter the track from previous collisions and all you've got to do is bomb around the oval over seven laps.

It sounds dead easy, but when a giant Bowser special shell goes bouncing around you might as well quit and start

## All the multiplayer

Every mode, right here, read on...

■ *Double Dash* goes further than any other *Mario Kart* if you love to play it in multiplayer. Now up to 16 players can take part simultaneously if you buy the

necessary adapters and hub for the game's Co-op mode (see p22 for more).

Four battle arenas are open at the start though for normal four-player, and there

are more to unlock, including one based on an early GameCube title, but just so you know what you're in for, here are the arenas in all their glory.



### Balloon Battle

Never mess with a winning formula is what we say and Nintendo certainly hasn't here. Three balloons are once again tied to your kart and if you get hit you'll lose one. Lose all three and it's Game Over.



### Shine Thief

Just like a Capture the Flag game, but this mode uses a Shine instead. It sits in the middle of the arena and if you've still got it after a minute you're the winner. Just keep a hold of it!



### Bob-omb Blast

This time Bob-ombs are your only weapon and if you get caught in a blast you'll light a star. Light three stars and you're finished, so watch out for those explosions or you could be back in the garage before you know it.



### Cookie Land

As the name suggests, this takes place on a giant cookie, with areas of icing to dive behind should a Shell be heading your way.



### Block City

It reminds us of Battle Mode 1 in *Super Mario Kart*. With its sneaky short cut and four corner areas to use, those battles are really going to be manic!



### Nintendo GameCube

It's a neat idea, but there's no hiding from any weapons, so you could find battles finishing within seconds as you motor around the purple beast.



### Pipe Plaza

This is the best of the lot. Sitting on two tiers, the top is reached by ramps and you can even hit pipes and blast out in different areas, just like Pac-Man!





■ Basically the dream is over for you, Birdo – back to the charity shop window



■ A split second from destruction, Luigi didn't even have time to think 'pasta'



## The all-new power slide\*

\*but the old-skool way is still cool...

■ There's now a new way to power slide around corners in addition to the old way of just holding down the shoulder buttons.

The only problem is that you won't get much of a boost and we found opponents still overtaking us after we took the time to do it. We say stick to the old way, but here's how to get your tyres flaming on those hairpins...



As you approach the bend, press either shoulder button to go into a power slide and move right and left on the 3D Stick.



Each time you move the Stick, the colour of the flames under your tyres will change from light orange to dark orange and then blue.



The blue flame is the highest speed charge you can get, so as soon as you've got this let go!







## How to... make LAN work

We show you how to link up for 16-player carnage

On its own, *Double Dash* is a classic four-player pile-up of racing, but Nintendo has cleared the way for *Mario Kart* to have up to 16 players yelling, screaming and swearing in simultaneous racing.



**1** The basic form of LAN (Local Area Network) link-up is to have up to eight players racing on two separate TV screens. First up you'll need two GCs.



**2** You'll also need to try and track down two Broadband Adapters which go for roughly £35. Snap it on the bottom of your Cube and it's game on!



**3** Next up you'll need a 10BASE-T Hub compatible cross cable that can be bought at PC World for around £10.



**4** Then all you need to do is grab your two copies of *Mario Kart Double Dash!!*, stick them in the GameCubes and switch on! You can manage that can't you?



## What about 16 players?

It's the more the merrier with *Double Dash*

The alternative is to buy a 10BASE-T hub that, like the cross cable, can be bought from PC World or Maplins. They sell for around £30-£50.

Using this system eight players can play on eight separate TVs as long as each person has got the game, a broadband adapter and a cross cable. This option even allows up to 16 players to take part (two people per GameCube and on their own TV) in the games Co-op mode. So get the Pringles in and fire it up!





**“It’s a stroke of genius – teaming up with a mate and trashing two others is what Nintendo gaming is all about.”**

## Cut corners

Find these short cuts to be the daddy

■ From what we’ve seen they aren’t on every track, but keep your eyes peeled because they will slice seconds off your time if you pull them off correctly. Here are some of the coolest short cuts we’ve spotted as we reviewed the game, so learn them well and you will become a *Mario Kart* master. The full lowdown’s next issue!



Find the lower deck on Daisy Cruiser and locate this corner for two items and a turbine that’ll blast you back up onto the main deck.



This pink road in Mushroom City cuts the corner right off and there’s sometimes a double item box ready for the taking inside.



There are loads of speed boosts on the edge of Mushroom Bridge, but keep in a straight line or you’ll drop right off the side.



Down by the water’s edge on Mushroom Bridge is this walkway. Enter the green pipe to be blasted out the other side. Sneaky.



Still on Mushroom Bridge, you’ll need a Mushroom for this as the rough ground slows you right down. Use it at the start of the cut.



■ We wish we were really here. With a sick-bag, of course

■ The mixed plumber and monkey events always got nasty

» again. Believe us we were still at it well into the night just wanting another go at beating everything on 150cc. Not many games make us want to do that!

Even though changes have been made in many areas (notably your kart decision) old habits die-hard and Nintendo has kept with old faithful in the *Mario Kart* Grand Prix mode. Once again there are four Cups to win – Mushroom, Flower, Star and Special – and four tracks on each stand between you and the victory procession through the town as you are adored by Pianta and Noki from *Super Mario Sunshine*.

Yes, you did here that right, people – Pianta and Noki. Not exactly the stars we were hoping for and even if the gameplay is neck and neck with the good old 16-bit belter there are no big fish and champagne corks to pop them with in all their GameCube glory. Now that

would’ve been pretty damn sweet, don’t you think?

But racing around each track will delight all you Nintendo fans. As you race them initially you’ll have to finish first, no question, but you’ll soon discover that to get ahead in multiplayer you’ll have to spend ages finding every short cut, along with the quirky moments that make Nintendo games such great fun to play.

What about Mushroom karts that, if bumped, will release a Mushie that can be used to tear up the road, or a waterside turn-off that’ll blast you out of a pipe further round the course? Not good enough? How about spinning off the highway to hit the speed boosts that are on the side of Mushroom Bridge or a Yoshi Circuit that looks just like our green dino pal!

Nothing seems to have been missed out in *Double Dash*. Even Donkey Kong will turn







# Tested First. Official. Best.

» round and pump his huge, hairy arms in the air whenever he hits a rival, racers will turn their heads to see their rivals speed by, even the dude on the back will help lean the kart sidecar-style as you power slide round the corners. We don't want to spoil the game for you, but there are tons of fun moments and nods to Nintendo's illustrious heritage that'll raise a smile if you know your stuff. Let's face it, this just wouldn't happen on any other console, so thank god for Mario Kart and Nintendo!

Just like the old *Mario Karts*, mastering *Double Dash* on 150cc will take over your life, but what Nintendo has done this time is add an element of strategy to how you drive. Now with two drivers you've got to keep switching as only the character on the back can cause havoc with weapons.

You can pick up double item boxes so your duo can both get an item, but the same rule still applies – the star at the back is king. The driver will just keep juggling their weapon (and that looks cool when you get the triple Mushroom power-up), but you'll have to switch them.



■ **Pile-up!**  
After this, Bowser got whiplash and sued Luigi – he lost the mansion

■ **Birdo gets the vindaloo treatment,** courtesy of a Mazza fireball



■ **Classic Battle mode action – feel the vengeance!**







■ Watch out for the big rock. Yes, THAT big rock THERE!



■ At least Wario's got the padding to keep him warm in this weather

## Fireballs? In Mario Kart?

Each star has a special weapon to get. Here are just a few of them...

■ New in *Mario Kart* this time around, the characters have the ability to pick up special weapons. Each character has their own specific weapon to let rip with, including Birdo's pink Egg that acts as a homing missile and Diddy Kong's giant banana that can cause multiple pile-ups if you drop it in an unforgiving place.

Again, we don't want to spoil the game too much for you, but here are some of the weapons that you'll be able to grab...



Mario's famous fireballs are now in *MK Double Dash!!* and you can use them to take out multiple targets. They even bounce off walls and fences as you zoom along.



Birdo's pink egg comes in very handy if you can't get a Red Shell. Go on missus, give those gokin' plumbers a hit.



Baby Bowser's special weapon is this Shell, the same as a normal one except this time it mows down multiple racers.



Bowser's Chain Chomp's a little erratic as it twists and turns all over the track, eating anything in its path.

Rising Sun

Panik in Chocoland

Rat Attack

BT Broadband is up to ten times faster than standard dial-up Internet, so now you can access the latest games and news from [freeloader.com](http://freeloader.com) in a flash. Connection and your broadband modem are free if you order online by December 21st.

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More Connections. More Possibilities.

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## Five nods to Nintendo

They aren't Sony y'know! Five history lessons a minute!

■ Nintendo has such a long, rich history that it has cleverly thrown in some classic characters and items. You may just spot them as you hurtle past Donkey Kong and Diddy on your way to the finish line.



Blue and Red Shy Guys are on the icy lake in Sherbet Land. Keep an eye out or you may hit them.



Check out the side of the vans on Mushroom Bridge – some have sprites of old-skool Mario!



Those angry Thwomps hang in the air just as you speed underneath them. Keep your fingers crossed that you don't get squashed.



Some of the car plates have POW as their ID on Mushroom Bridge, but you'll only be able to see them in the replays.



Remember the Yoshi helicopter in Yoshi's Island? Now he hovers above his own track!

» The double item boxes are sometimes on the outside of corners so you'll have to make up your mind whether you really need those two items or whether you can just make do with one. You've also got to consider risking losing your position in the race. All this to do in just a split second? That's the life you're gonna lead in *Double Dash*.

Mr Miyamoto and his team of developers have also tinkered with the line-up of weapons on offer. The classic Blue Shell now grows a little pair of wings and buzzes through the chasing pack before smashing into the race leader and each character has a specific special weapon that can be picked up and unleashed.

Mario lets rip with his fireballs that instantly burn the ass of the weapon thrower. There's much laughter as they hop about trying to put out the fire. Then there's Diddy Kong's massive banana that's almost impossible to avoid, Yoshi's homing green egg and a Chain Chomp that breaks away from your kart if you hit a car and carries on down the track munching anything in its path.

But as single player goes it will only last a few days as no doubt most of you will hammer all the Cups until you've got every gold trophy in a short time. You'll return to beat times and scores, but as with previous *Mario Karts* what will make it a gem is the multiplayer and this time Nintendo has done something radically

**“Mario lets rip with his fireballs that instantly burn the ass of the weapon thrower. There's much laughter as they hop about trying to put out the fire.”**



■ Can you imagine two worse people to get stuck behind in a traffic jam?





# "But why did they get rid of the Feather?"

Which *Mario Kart* game rules? Mike and Tim decide once and for all.

	<b><i>SUPER MARIO KART</i></b>	<b><i>MARIO KART 64</i></b>	<b><i>MARIO KART: SUPER CIRCUIT</i></b>	<b><i>MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH</i></b>
<b>TRACKS</b>	 Brilliantly designed, but you only get 25 seconds per lap — a bit of a swizz and short compared to the others. <b>Score: 2</b>	 Much longer in length and great features like the train on Kalimari Desert spiced up the action. <b>Score: 3</b>	 Just like <i>Super Mario Kart</i> , only not as tough. Rainbow Road isn't half the challenge it should be. <b>Score: 2</b>	 Sheer brilliance. Vibrant worlds with dinosaurs, overhead roller coasters, sand storms, the list goes on... <b>Score: 4</b>
<b>MULTIPLAYER</b>	 It may only be two players, but we STILL play it. Battle mode course 1 could be a game on its own. <b>Score: 4</b>	 Four-player racing had no music and was tough to see, plus the Battle mode courses were a bit crap. <b>Score: 1</b>	 Awesome with four players, but you need four GBAs and four carts — not everyone has MK loving friends. <b>Score: 2</b>	 Link-up play kicks ass, but how many of you have the set up? Only time can tell if this will live up to SMK. <b>Score: 3</b>
<b>GAMEPLAY</b>	 Flawless. It's simple, challenging, totally addictive and still the most chaotic of any MK game. <b>Score: 4</b>	 Highly playable, but the one-player cups are too easy and nowhere near as mad as the first game. <b>Score: 2</b>	 The best on GBA. Almost as good as SMK, but over-generous item selection spoils the challenge. <b>Score: 3</b>	 The slow-response handling is a radical change to SMK. Plays brilliantly, but we feel SMK has the edge. <b>Score: 3.5</b>
<b>NOM UK TEAM VOTE</b>	 Speak bad of SMK and you'll have Tim, Dan and Kingsley to answer to. Dean chooses to co-operate. <b>Score: 4</b>	 Although it's still great, MK64 comes in fourth due to the greatness of its brothers. Sorry, you scored nothing! <b>Score: 0</b>	 Dom prefers this to MK64 and <i>Double Dash</i> , but has never played SMK. You missed out, Dom. You did wrong. <b>Score: 1</b>	 The brand-new Battle modes and colourful tracks get Mike's, Mark's and the work-experience kid's vote. <b>Score: 3</b>
<b>FINAL SCORES</b>	<b>14</b> <i>Super Mario Kart</i> is, was and probably always will be the best. A real golden memory.	<b>6</b> A top title, but it's got stiff competition — sadly the worst of the <i>Mario Kart</i> family.	<b>8</b> The mini-me of the <i>Mario Kart</i> series is one of the best games on the GBA.	<b>13½</b> This will rule NOM UK office lunch times from now on. EAT CHAIN CHOMP!







## "The Blue Shell now grows a pair of wings before smashing into the race leader."

»» different – an awesome Co-op mode. One person driving and the other throwing weapons may sound like crazy talk and when we tried it on Waluigi Stadium we were all over the place as we switched at the wrong moment only to see ourselves plough into a massive Piranha Plant. But believe us, it's a stroke of genius – teaming up with a mate and trashing two others is what Nintendo gaming is all about. And rubbing their faces in it is just why this rules.

No *Mario Kart* would be complete without some other old favourites jumping on board for a ride. There are all-new Battle modes, although we found only a couple of arenas worthy of replaying, plus two new additions to the line-up – Shine Thief and Bob-omb Blast, but there's more about these on p20. Time Trial also gets another outing and before you ask, yes, you can save your Ghost times to a memory card and keep racing them to your heart's content. We did and hammered Mario and Luigi in their pram! Just keep practising 'cos these *Mario Kart* challenges are bound

to be running in *NOM UK* for many months to come.

But surely there are still some doubters out there, eh? What faults have we found with the game? Well, the earlier cups are too easy to finish for a start, but that has always been a moan *Mario Kart* fans have had.

The new power slide system is okay, but you might as well stick to the old-skool way rather than having to turn in and out of the bends just to give you a 5mph speed boost that fizzles out after about a nanosecond. It's not worth it.

What about the fact that some of the tracks lack a little originality? After all, Mushroom City is just a rip-off of Toad's Turnpike and Waluigi Stadium is just a clone of Wario Stadium. But really that's all the problems we've found. If you want a racer with the stamp of Nintendo quality plastered all over it you have to get a copy of *Double Dash*.

This really is GameCube heaven and a joy to play after such a long wait. Just make sure this Christmas is a *Mario Kart* Christmas. **Tim**



■ Whoosh! The wind is whistling through his... shell now!



■ Want to describe a four-player Battle? It's something like, 'Aaaaargh!'

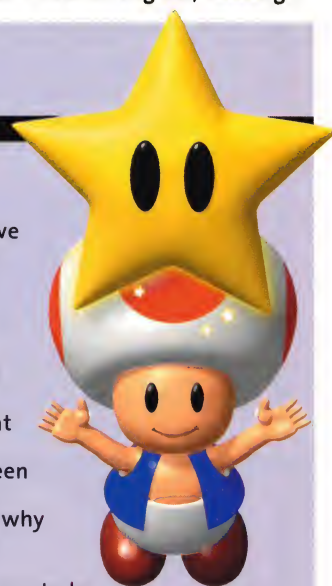
## I'm the best!

You certainly are Toady. But are you in the game?



■ There are 16 characters in the opening line-up, but we know there's only one character you are itching to get your hands on and that's Toad. He was Dave McComb's MK64 racer of choice a few years ago at the height of his daily battles with Shaun and it's been a regular discussion here at *NOM UK* as to why he wasn't in the E3 or ECTS versions.

But finally there seems to be an answer and you heard it here first, Toad is in *Double Dash*. We won't tell you how to get him, but let's just say you'll need to put in plenty of hours of hardcore racing to get him unlocked. Happy hunting and good luck!





## Out of sight

Race well and you'll get some awesome stuff!

Playing *Super Circuit* unlocked all the original *Super Mario Kart* tracks and *Double Dash* has followed its lead by tucking away some juicy secrets for you to uncover.

Karts for the rest of the initial racers

are unlocked for you if you can crack some of the game modes and extra Battle mode arenas are revealed, including one based on one of GameCube's biggest hits. Can you guess which one?



■ That was a Red Shell. Red means danger. Red VERY bad...

■ (Below) Aww... look at his big, fat hairy ass



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You've been dying for *Double Dash* – this is the best *Mario Kart* since the original.

### No if...

You have no mates. One-player Grand Prix mode won't last ages, so get some pals!

### You'll love it if you like...

Previous *Mario Kart* games and multiplayer moments that will live with you forever.

### GRAPHICS

9

Bold, beautiful, packed with character and nods to Nintendo games you love.

### SOUND

8

Not classics, but the tunes will have you humming. The whistling is annoying.

### GAMEPLAY

9

It's so simple to pick up that you'll buzz through one-player and love it.

### LIFE SPAN

### YEARS

Well, until the next one turns up. Everyone should play this. It should be the law.

### VERDICT

> We'll boldly claim that this game will never, ever get old. Forget all about *MK64*, that was just a blip. Mario's back, *Double Dash* rules and you shouldn't be reading this. Go and get a copy. NOW!



**BEST BIT:** Mario Kart multiplayer. Beating your mates is so sweet.



**WORST BIT:** The new power slide system. It just doesn't work!

### SECOND OPINION

> I wasn't sure, but I played it and I liked it. Then I played it some more and came to my senses – *Double Dash* is the nuts! Tim, can I have a week off to play? Mike

### NOM UK'S RATING

94%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK





**CELEBRATE**



Until August 1992 there was a hole in all our lives; an empty place where a cool kart-racer should've been. Many people questioned what was wrong. The economy suffered. Dogs howled. Cats refused to purr... Then, into the vacuum, burst *Super Mario Kart*, along with the fledgling *Nintendo Magazine System* (granddaddy of *NOM UK*). That issue went on to sell 166,000 copies and the game became our best-loved racer of all time. Now, Celebrate Nintendo looks back at *NMS's Super Mario Kart* review...

**REVIEW**

**2 PLAYER**

**4 MEG**

**DRV GAME**

**PRICE: £49.99 BY NINTENDO**

**RELEASE OCTOBER**

**CONTROL JOYPAD**

**GAME DIFFICULTY EASY/MEDIUM**

**CONTINUES 0**

**SKILL LEVELS 2**

**RESPONSIVENESS SMART**

**1ST DAY SCORE N/A**

**ORIGIN All-new Go-Kart racing game based on characters from the successful Mario games throughout time.**

**EVERYONE** seems to think that Mario, Bowser, the Koopas and Donkey Kong are the deadliest of enemies. But this is potentially not so, for they can regularly be seen go-kart racing with one another. Yes indeed, our hero the mighty Mario and his friends enjoy nothing more than a relaxing whizz around the town with the enemy of all Mushroom World and his cohorts.

Now, courtesy of Nintendo comes your chance to join in this Sunday league of racing fun and frolic... only to mention Nante and splits. You choose to play the part of any one of eight Mario-related characters, including the U-bend fighter one himself, in a bid to out-kart your enemies - and your friends!

**MARIO KART ACTION**

**MUSHROOM ROULETTE**

Although all the SNES-controlled players have a single weapon which they are able to use a number of times per lap, the formula for human players is reversed. Near the start of the race a circuit is distributed a number of question mark bonus pads. Driving over these opens up to you flash up in sequence. Pressing the A button selects the item of your choice. Alternatively, it's possible to let the computer choose randomly by leaving the route pad spin for a short while. However, each item can only be used once. The eight items up for grabs are as follows:

**COIN:** Adds two coins to your total.

**MUSHROOM:** Short speed boost for a lap.

**GREEN SHELL:** Shell fired in whichever direction the road is paved.

**RED SHELL:** Near seeking shell which locks on to the nearest target and knocks it into a spin based on the recipient.

**FEATHER:** One super powerful jump is the gift of the gods.

**BANANA:** A banana skin fired in your choice of direction, which lies around on the track hoping to slip up another contestant.

**LIGHTNING:** Sprinkles all the other racers to any size for a limited time, allowing you to run them over in a flash of your micro state.

**JIMMINY KARTER**

Each of the eight racers has their own personal (and/or) character traits which give them their own personal racing styles. There are three most powerful on which performance is judged - speed, handling, and responsiveness. The last of these is the most important, as it is the roadholding ability of the kart. Here is a rundown of each character for their strengths and weaknesses and the special item they are equipped with as computer opponents.

**DONKEY KONG JR**

Agile type hands give DK past the best handling and the weight of his bottom like perspective gives him to the road quite efficiently. However, Kong pays the price for his horns, so the speed has incurred.

**SPECIAL ITEM: BANANA SKINS.**

Donkey Kong throws these liberally around the track, so while they look until someone drives over them, they are quite dangerous.

**BOWSER**

The mean old Koopa leader himself is the last person you'd expect to get on a kart, but the big horned one while they may not be the most powerful, they can't resist the thrill of the speed. He'll take down a bit, though it does provide him with exceptional roadholding.

**>HOW MUCH?!**

Fifty nicker was a lot of money in 1992 - it equates to £472 today (or £65 if your calculator isn't broken). But *Super Mario Kart* was certainly worth its weight in crumpled fivers.

**>MUSHROOM ROULETTE**

Ah, the classics. *Double Dash* may have Chain Chomps, *Mario Kart 64* can claim the infamous Blue Shell, but this is where it all began. There is **NOTHING** as sweet as hitting your mate with a Red Shell just as they're cackling their way to the finish.

30 Nintendo







# YOU OWN



*THUG™ starts YOU as a skate punk out to make it big.*



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*Put your face in the game to skate as YOU.\**

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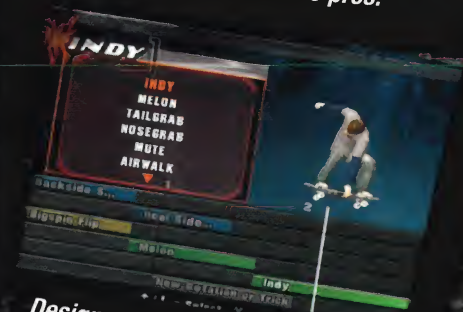
# THE UNDERGROUND



Tear it up in cars or other rides.



Star in all of the Story Mode movies alongside the pros.



Design your own tricks, decks, goals, and levels. It's your game!



## TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

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Become a Star!



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\*Face mapping technology is exclusive to PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system and requires online connectivity.



# What We Know

All the Nintendo news you need

## Coollest Game Boy Ever!

Fed up of Nintendo sending all the cool SPs to Japan? They saved the best one for us – look!

**T**hat's what you want. Oh yes it is. It's a flame-red GBA SP, with a menacing Groudon face varnished on the top. You want it because it's cool. You don't even need to like *Pokémon*, you just need to want a handheld games powerhouse with an angry face on the top. Grr!

As you may have guessed this beast is one of a pair. Two new *Pokémon* Super Paks hit the shops on November 28th, one for *Pokémon Ruby* and one for *Pokémon Sapphire*. In each saucy box you get your chosen *Pokémon* game, the exclusive *Pokémon* SP and a *Pokémon* case to carry it around in. All for a perfectly reasonable £120, or thereabouts.

But thanks to some clever timing on Nintendo's part, that doesn't need to come out of your pocket. By invoking the seasonal 'Christmas' clause, you may be able to force a family member to BUY IT FOR YOU. Christmas: it's about Jesus and stuff, but it's also about getting a Game Boy with a *Pokémon* face on the top.

The *Pokémon Sapphire* version features

a slick blue SP, with a Kyogre face varnished on the lid. In our opinion, it's not quite as cool as the *Ruby* machine. That Groudon face just looks too awesome. You know the *NOM UK* team is raiding the games shop for those on launch day.

Pretty cool, eh? The Japanese can keep their white *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* GBAs and the mint-green *Sword of Mana* ones. The pendulum of glory has swung

back, and here it is: casting a glorious *Pokémon* shadow over Europe. We will never whine about missing out on limited edition hardware again. We promise.

**"Christmas: it's about getting a Game Boy with a *Pokémon* face on the top."**



You cheeky little Kyogre



That's just naughty



That's what we're talking about





# Mario and Link team up!

## Exclusive *Legend of Zelda* bonus disc in *Double Dash* hardware bundle

*Mario Kart: Double Dash* is the sort of game people buy the console to play. Nintendo knows this. But when they put together the *Double Dash* hardware bundle at £99, they threw in a cheeky extra – a five-game *Legend of Zelda* bonus disc.

The disc contains full versions of the original *Legend of Zelda* from the NES, as well as the sequel, *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*. The graphics might look a little bit dated compared to today's games, but the gameplay is pure gold. Joining those NES games on the disc are the two classic N64 *Zelda* games, *The Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*. Rounding off the disc *Zelda* fans will die for is an exclusive playable demo of *The Wind Waker*.

Nintendo confirmed to us that the only way to get hold of this disc is by buying the new hardware bundle. There are currently no plans to sell this disc separately, or bundle it with any other GameCube title. Here at *NOM UK* we think your best chance of getting hold of the disc otherwise is through the STARS catalogue, as the *Ocarina of Time/Zelda Master Quest* bonus disc that was free with *The Wind Waker* showed up there. That's pure speculation on our part though, and it certainly wouldn't be for a good few months yet. Nintendo will sort you out, kids. Keep the faith.

# Cube Sales Rocket

## Price cuts sees hardware sales increase tenfold

The price of GameCube went down and the sales figures went up. How unexpected. In the first two days after the price cut in the UK, sales leapt 400%. Across Europe, the reduction saw GameCube sell ten times more units in the first week than it did at the old price point. Mission accomplished for Nintendo, it seems.

Nintendo of Europe Managing Director David Gosen had this to say: "With the very best games now combined with a truly unbeatable console price, GameCube is flying off the shelves across Europe." He didn't go on to add "Yeah! You like that, don't you bitch!", which is a bit of a shame. Because that would have been amusing.



## TOO MUCH INFORMATION

### THE QUEST CONTINUES

A few months back, we reported that a *Virtua Fighter* RPG was in development for GameCube. Sega's silence on the issue since then had us worried, but Sega's Yu Suzuki told Japanese mag *Dorimaga* that all was well. "*Virtua Fighter* is seen as one of our most important franchises, so the game must be exactly right," said Suzuki. There's still no word on a release date, though.

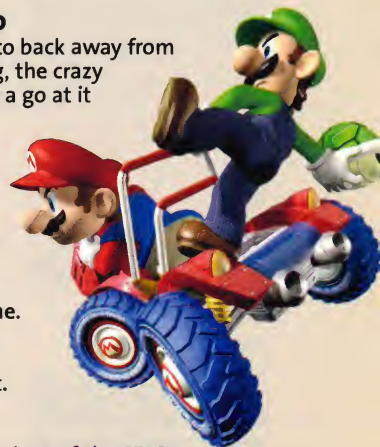


### PILOTWINGS FLIES AWAY

If whispers in the US are to be believed, *PilotWings* will slip a generation of hardware. *Rebel Strike* developer, Factor 5, was apparently proceeding with a 'Cube update for Nintendo's seminal flight franchise, but it was running very late. The game may now be held over to the next home machine, currently codenamed N5.

### ONLINE UNDERGROUND

As Nintendo continues to back away from real-time online gaming, the crazy internet kids are having a go at it themselves. We mentioned the Warp Pipe project here a few issues back, but it's moved on. Check out [www.warppipe.com](http://www.warppipe.com) for details on how some American students are playing *Mario Kart* online. Warning: it requires an improbable amount of specialist PC equipment.



### CLUB NINTENDO

Nintendo Japan's equivalent of the STARS catalogue has gone live. Unsurprisingly, there's tons of cool stuff, so instead of boring screensavers and T-shirt transfers, the Japanese can apply for awesome posters and the like. The kind of exclusive Nintendo merchandise we'd run through a wall for over here. Have a butchers at [www.club.nintendo.jp](http://www.club.nintendo.jp).

### SHIZZLE MY NIZZLE

We might have come away from this month's exposure to *True Crime* feeling a little queasy (see p60), but that was before we knew about Snoop Dogg. As well as spreading his lazy G-funk all over the soundtrack, the Doggfather also appears in a special Dogg Patrol mode. You take the braided one out in his custom Cadillac Snoop de Ville and solve crimes all over LA. Have that on your televizzle.



### CHINA CRISIS?

Well, Nintendo's N64-derived TV game iQue didn't hit its end of October launch date. We know, because we tried to get one for curiosity's sake. Nintendo has gone on the record to state that the odd little machine won't be released outside of China. It was previously thought the machine might be rolled out in South America and beyond. We can't wait to play one, to be honest.



# Coollest Calendar Ever

Nintendo ships this stuff out for free in Japan. We're showing you, just to make it 100% clear you live in the wrong country.

At the same time Nintendo was running its Famicom SP promotion in Japan, there was also a Famicom Calendar promotion. You needed to send off two 'proof of purchase' seals from different games, but boy was it worth the effort. This has to be one of the coolest calendars ever created.



The stylish front cover. The Famicom rocks the hardest



Donkey Kong action for January. It's what you need



Come February, it's original Mario Bros. time



When gun games collide: March is hunting season



April: Excitebike sprites. It rhymes, so it's right



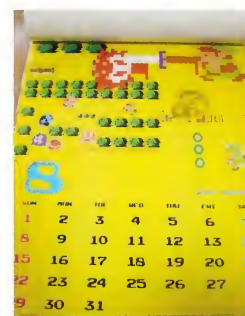
A sports overload for May. Come on the Manchester!



Ugh! *Sword of Mana* for June! Don't like that much



July. Redemption. A big Mario and his turd-like foe



August is the month of the Link. It's a special time



September. Ancient shooter *Xevious*. Hmm, odd choice



Cometh the October, cometh the *Balloon Kid*



Feel the *Mappy* love in November. Feel it burn



That's a bad ending. *Final Fantasy* for December



But wait! An awesome back cover. Now it truly is over

## Free music collection

New *Tony Hawk's* comes packed with more than SEVENTY tunes on the soundtrack

It must be the fattest game soundtrack ever. With well over 70 tunes blaring away as you grind (not at the same time, though), *T.H.U.G.* has the soundtrack of justice. If you like rock, rap or punk, there must be an artist here that makes you feel jolly.

### The rock line-up:

Authority Zero, Blind Iris, Camarosmith, Crash and Burn, Electric Frankenstein, Entombed, Five Horse Johnson, Fu Manchu, High on Fire, Hookers, Hot Water Music, In Flames, Kiss,

Mastodon, Nine Pound Hammer, Orange Goblin, Queens of the Stone Age, S.O.D., Smoke Blow, Solace, Superjoint, Ritual, The Explosion, The Hellacopters, The Midnight Evils, Unida, Jane's Addiction.

### The selection for hip-hop headz:

Aceyalone, Anacron, Busdrive, Cannibal Ox, Dan the Automator featuring Kool Keith, Deltion 3030, DJ Qbert, Frog One, J-Live, Juggaknots, Jurassic 5, L.A. Symphony, Living Legends, Mr. Complex, Mr. Dibbs, Mr. Lif, Murs,

Nas, People Under The Stairs, Quasimoto, R.A. The Rugged Man, Supernatural, The Herbaliser featuring MF Doom.

### Or if you prefer the taste of Punk:

Angry Amputees, Assorted Jelly Beans, Bad Religion, Blue Collar Special, Bracket, Dropkick Murphys, Flamethrower, G.B.H., Mike V and the Rats, NOFX, Paint It Black, Refused, Rise Against, Rubber City Rebels, Social Distortion, Stiff Little Fingers, Strike Anywhere, Sublime, The Browns, The Clash, The Transplants.



## GAME BLITZ

It's the most mental time of the year for games releases, so we've pulled together all the release dates we could muster to make it easier to manage. You're never going to afford them all, but that's what Santa was invented for. Bring it on.

### 14/11/2003

- *Mario Kart: Double Dash!!* (GC)
- *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (GC & GBA)
- *Gadius* (GC)
- *Beyblade* (GBA)
- *Pokémon Pinball: Ruby & Sapphire* (GBA)
- *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* (GBA)
- *Spyro Adventure* (GBA)



### 21/11/2003

- *True Crime: Streets of L.A.* (GC)
- *Need for Speed: Underground* (GC)
- *SpongeBob SquarePants: Battle for Bikini Bottom* (GC & GBA)
- *Tony Hawk's Underground* (GC & GBA)
- *Brother Bear* (GBA)
- *Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga* (GBA)
- *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* (GBA)
- *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004* (GBA)



### 28/11/2003

- *1080° Avalanche* (GC)
- *Sonic Heroes* (GC)
- *Beyblade: Super Tournament Battle* (GC)
- *Medal of Honor: Rising Sun* (GC)
- *Metal Arms: Glitch in the System* (GC)
- *Top Angler* (GC)
- *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (GBA)
- *Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeondice Monsters* (GBA)

### 5/12/2003

- *Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu* (GC)
- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (GC)
- *Mario Party 5* (GC)
- *XGRA* (GC)
- *XIII* (GC)
- *Judge Dredd: Dredd vs. Death* (GC)
- *Mission: Impossible – Operation Surma* (GBA)

### 12/12/2003

- *The Sims Bustin' Out* (GC)
- *Medal of Honor: Infiltrator* (GBA)

### 19/12/2003

- *Need for Speed: Underground* (GBA)
- *The Sims Bustin' Out* (GBA)



## Catch the Snitch!

**Wanna enter the Quidditch World Cup? You'll need a 'Cube and a head for heights!**

Football on broomsticks. To some, it seems like the most soul-destroyingly ludicrous thing ever. But then, they'll miss out on the glory of winning the inaugural *Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup* video game tournament.

We hope you caught the heads-up on our website – [www.nintendomagazine.co.uk](http://www.nintendomagazine.co.uk) – as the deadline for entries has now passed. Seven regional 'Big W' Woolworths stores carried the application forms – Beckton, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, Manchester, Norwich and Stockton-on-Tees. The first round of competition is on November 15th, with the national final on November 29th at the studio where the game was developed in Chertsey, Surrey.

But that's not all: our UK champion then goes on to represent the country in the international finals on December 21st. If it's one of you hardcore *NOM UK* readers, don't let us down. The glory should be

motivation enough, but there's a whole stack of Nintendo prizes, too.

We'll have coverage from the regional final in next month's issue. Read more on the tournament website. You can find it at [www.quidditchworldcup.com](http://www.quidditchworldcup.com).





## > What's your earliest gaming memory?

My earliest memory was playing *Pong* when I was about five years old. My dad brought home one of the first dedicated units that Nolan Bushnell made. We were one of the first families on the block to get an Atari 2600 and I lived in front of the TV for the first few years that we had it. I loved *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids*, but *Kaboom* was really my game. That game was great!

## > And that was the first games system you ever owned, right?

Yeah, that was the good-old Atari 2600, but the first one that I actually bought with my own money was the NES. I bought it when I was 16 because I needed to replace the venerable Intellivision...

## > What was the first Nintendo game you ever played?

I am pretty sure that it was *Donkey Kong* in the arcade. *DK* came out before *Mario Bros.* didn't it?

## > What is your favourite game ever?

Oh man. Umm... On the older consoles it would probably be a platformer like *Lost Vikings* or a shooter like *Contra*. But on current systems it's probably *Sly Cooper* on the PS2 (known as *Sly Raccoon* in the UK). I just think the design is so elegant.

## > What existing game do you most wish you had created?

Hmm... Probably *Battlefield 1942*. I really love games where you compete with your friends. There are so many cool situations that get created when playing *Battlefield*. It has some real staying power.

## > Who is the best games character ever?

It's gotta' be Mario. Universally, I think everyone likes him. The vibrant worlds he exists in help form his personality. But for me I think one of the most important parts is that he's very much like an old friend.

## > And what was the last game you



John smiles, shortly before realising we were from **NOM UK** and had brought no biscuits

**GAMING LIVES**

# John Blackburn

**JOB:** President, Avalanche Studios

**CURRENTLY WORKING ON:** Putting the finishing touches to *Tak and the Power of Juju*, previewed this issue on p70.

**PREVIOUS GAMES:** *Mortal Kombat Mythologies* (N64), *Off-Road Challenge* (N64).

## managed to complete?

Umm... let's see. I think the last game I finished was *Metroid Prime*.

## > What Nintendo game are you most looking forward to?

Hmm... *Mario Kart: Double Dash!!* – I'm a real *Mario Kart* fanatic.

## > Who would win in a fight between Mario and Sonic, and why?

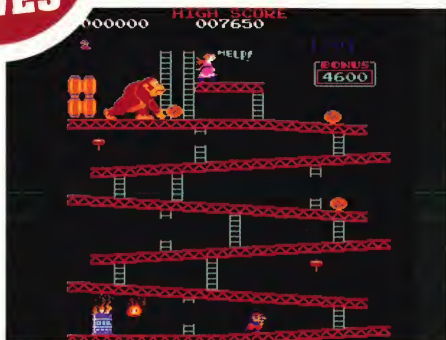
Man, I've never pondered this one. I think that Mario would win. Sonic obviously has speed, but I think that Mario has more tricks up his sleeve.

## > What special weapon or ability would you give Mario in *Mario 128*?

I'd give him the hammer he had in *Donkey Kong*. There's nothing like cruising around smashing objects with an enormous hammer in your hand!



**SOME OF JOHN'S FAVES**





**YOUR SHOUT**

# The NOM Survey

## I'm getting all the right signals

**We asked:** GameCube is now £79.99. Is that a good move by Nintendo, or does it send out the wrong messages?

**POLL RESULT**

**YES 65%**  
**NO 35%**

■ GameCube's price drop will mean that more people will get to play classics like *The Wind Waker* and *Metroid Prime*.  
**LEWIS PATON**

■ I think it's a great idea as lots of people who couldn't afford a GameCube can now get one for Christmas. The low price will mean that even PS2 and Xbox owners will buy one.  
**STEPHEN McCONACHIE**

■ It is a great move by Nintendo. It's coming up to Christmas and many parents will be looking to buy something cool and modern. At only 80 quid the console will appeal to a much wider audience.  
**PHIL SMART**

■ No! Bad move! It means that many people are going to think that the GC is rubbish and that's why Nintendo is selling it cheap.  
**JAMIE DORAN**

■ I think the price drop will send out the wrong message as most of my mates think that Nintendo is now getting desperate.  
**JAMIE MARTIN**



## Bring on the old games!

**We asked:** Would you like more or less retro coverage in *NOM UK*?

**POLL RESULT**

**MORE 75%**  
**LESS 25%**

■ The next generation are the wave of the future. Obviously for 'Know-it-all' and 'Name that game' there must be some oldies mentioned, but the past should push us forward not hinder us.  
**ANDREW LAWLESS**

■ I love retro games like *Mario Bros.* and *Super Metroid*. I think the Super NES was even better than GameCube.  
**NESTOR WATACH**

■ I love retro gaming! It brings back memories for older gamers and gives younger gamers an education of all the classics. I really liked the Classic Scene page *NOM* used to have at the end of the magazine.  
**SAMI SMITH**

■ More retro coverage, please. Perhaps even a retro section in the mag where you can review classic Nintendo games and give vital tips for them.  
**PHIL SMART**

■ One of the best things about the magazine is that you still give credit to the Super NES which I have been playing and defending for many years.  
**ADAM MARABLE**



## This month's questions

■ There are certainly a lot of big titles about this Christmas, but has this been a good year overall for Nintendo?

■ With GameCube's price dropping to £79.99, should Nintendo also lower the price for an original GBA?

■ It's what we know him best for, but does the next GameCube Mario game have to be a platformer?



Email YES or NO and a brief comment to:  
[michael.jackson@emap.com](mailto:michael.jackson@emap.com) – don't forget to include your name, though!

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Create brilliance. With **OFF THE BALL™** Control.



It's in the game.™



# Toad

BEHIND THE CODE

Once in a while we bring you a story from behind the scenes of a game you grew up with...



This month, **NOM UK** sits down with Toad, the small, mushroom-headed guest star of the *Super Mario* series.

**NOM UK:** How did you get your start in the industry?

**Toad:** To cut a long story short, I had just lost my job and was scanning the classifieds. Then I saw this open casting call. They needed a bunch of mushrooms for an upcoming Atari game. As it turns out, of course, the game was *Centipede*.

**NOM UK:** What was it like working at Atari?

**Toad:** We got shot at, you know, a lot. There were no special effects back then, no post-production trickery. I was scared as hell, but a job's a job, you know? Anyway, once that was all done, Namco came calling. They were putting together a maze game and there were some parts available for snack foods. I tried out, but apparently mushrooms give poor old Pac-Man the trots.

**NOM UK:** And if you'd been in *Pac-Man*, your life might have been completely different.

**Toad:** Oh, absolutely. I didn't think I'd ever get another chance

like that. But then I got a call from my agent saying that Nintendo wanted to do a sequel to *Mario Bros.* The part called for mushrooms that were going to be eaten so the main character would grow impossibly huge. I said I didn't do that kind of thing. But then he said there was another part – the Mushroom Retainer. That part actually had a line, which was a really big thing in those days. And so when I went down there, I went right into Mr. Miyamoto's office and started delivering the line. "The Princess is in another castle! Another castle!" And he just loved it.

**NOM UK:** Did you have any idea how big *Super Mario Bros.* would be?

**Toad:** None at all. In those early days, we were like one big family, doing what we thought would be a well-liked independent game. But it just exploded. Instant popularity. Wild parties. At one point it was me and three of the girls from *Wizards and Warriors* in a hot

tub, one New Year's Eve. And we were just buck-ass nak...

**NOM UK:** That's probably enough of that. Now, with *Super Mario Bros. 2* you got your biggest role yet.

**Toad:** I was so thrilled when they told me. What I didn't expect was how hard it was to do that athletic stuff. Mario, Luigi – those guys were total professionals. The stress of being a playable character got to me. And that's when I started drinking, a lot. And everybody knew, but it was acceptable in Japan, you know? To just go out after work and party.

**NOM UK:** And then came *Super Mario Bros. 3*. And you were back to a supporting role.

**Toad:** What was worse was *Super Mario World*. I wasn't asked back for that at all. Yoshi had stolen my thunder and I resented him for years. Nintendo still kept me around, you know, but out of the spotlight. In retrospect, I think they were trying to lighten my workload so I could get my life together. But it just made me worse, drove me into a bad depression. I think that was the lowest point in my life.

**NOM UK:** But you were still working here and there.

**Toad:** Bit parts mainly... it got much better with *Mario Party*. It wasn't a starring role, but I was all over the game. But I was pretty much off my head the entire time we were shooting *Mario Party 2*. People would pass my square and I'd just take my pants off and throw them at the guys. I thought it was a riot, but they didn't think it was funny 'cos I'd usually wet myself by that time. Then I'd go home and it would just be awful there too, because my marriage was falling apart. I hadn't slept in the same bed with my wife for about three months. And finally, one day I come home early from the set of *Mario Party 3* and I find her in the sack with Bob-Omb.

**NOM UK:** ...

**Toad:** I knew we were having problems, but here's my wife, you know, sleeping with some guy. And we went through a rather messy divorce. I'm paying alimony. Nintendo said I had to go to rehab or I was fired. I was so frustrated that I punched Chain Chomp and broke my hand. And he was my best friend. I checked into The Priory and got clean. I came back to host *Mario Party 4* on 'Cube and I'll be back in *Mario Party 5* this year. I've got a new lease on life!



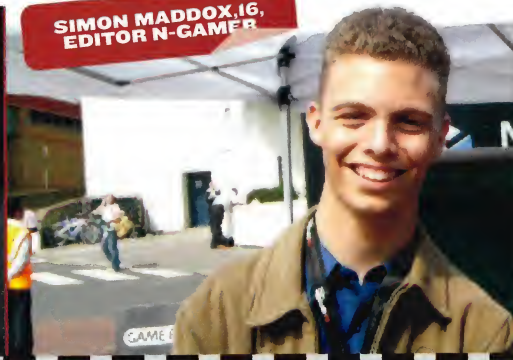
# Nintendo® Know-it-all

It's gamers versus developers every month.

RICHARD EMERY,  
ASSISTANT PRODUCER,  
SPHINX



SIMON MADDOX, 16,  
EDITOR N-GAMER



**NAME THREE GAMES THAT WERE PUBLISHED FOR THE ILL-FATED 64DD UNIT.**

**"Mario Paint Studio, Zelda: Master Quest and Doshin the Giant."** (0)

Master Quest was never actually released. Really, that's something a man should know.

**"Mario Paint, F-Zero and, err, Sim City?"** (1)

Scorebag! Good work, son.

**WHAT KIND OF GAME WAS REVENGE OF THE GATOR?**

**"It's a pinball game on the Game Boy."** (1)

Yep. And a damn fine one.

**"I've got no idea."** (0)

It was a Game Boy pinball game. It rocked the hardest.

**WHO PRESENTS THE TROPHY WHEN YOU WIN A CUP ON SUPER MARIO KART?**

**"Lakitu presents the trophy."** (0)

You what? It's the giant fish. THE GIANT FLYING FISH.

**"It's Toad, isn't it? I can't really remember."** (0)

How can you not remember? A giant flying fish is MEMORABLE, don't you think?

**IN ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST, WHICH ITEM ALLOWS LINK TO SWIM?**

**"Zora's Flippers. Absolute doddle that one..."** (1)

Well, you've got a big surprise coming, Emery. Laugh it up with your beard.

**"The flippers."** (0)

ZORA'S FLIPPERS, Maddox. Honestly, show some cocking respect, will you.

**WHO IS KOJI KONDO?**

**"I haven't got a clue."** (0)

Only the genius who wrote all the best Nintendo game music. LEARN.

**"He is the, oh, err... can't remember."** (0)

You'd remember his music. That awesome Zelda theme? Him.

**MCCLOUD, TOAD, HARE AND LOMBARDI. WHAT ARE THEIR FIRST NAMES?**

**"Fox McCloud, Slippy Toad, Peppy Hare and Falco Lombardi."** (1)

Got little models of them have you? Do you stroke them? Weirdo.

**"Fox, Falco Lombardi, Slippy Toad. The last one? Hare? Can't remember."** (0.5)

Take a half. Everyone forgets the weedy rabbit guy.

**WHICH GAME SERIES FEATURES MAD WOLF, SUPER PIRANHA AND WILD BOAR?**

**"The F-Zero games. Again pretty easy..."** (1)

EASY? We'll see who's laughing at full time, pal.

**"No idea."** (0)

F-Zero, man! What the hell is wrong with you?!

**FINAL FANTASY VI CAME OUT HERE AS A DIFFERENT NUMBER. WHAT WAS IT?**

**"Final Fantasy III."** (1)

Do you have a life? Or is that also a fantasy?

**"Number... V or IV. Probably V."** (0)

More like III, actually. Whoops.

**ZELDA: THE WAND OF GAMELON IS A REAL ZELDA GAME. IS THAT TRUE OR FALSE?**

**"It appeared on the Philips CD-i."** (1)

That's your favourite console, that is.

**"True. It's a CD-i game."** (1)

Yep – and it stinks like Ganondorf's jockstrap.

**IN THE WORLD OF SUPER MARIO, WHO IS PAULINE?**

**"Pauline's the character Donkey Kong captured in his arcade classic."** (1)

Of course, you knew that. Of course you did. [Strokes chin]

**"She's in, err, damn. Can't remember."** (0)

She's the Donkey Kong damsel. Actually, were you even born then?

**FINAL SCORE**

**0**

You're banned. You insisted on using email, breaking the first rule of Know-It-All. Who's laughing now?

**3.5**

Bit of a stinker for N-Gamer's Nintendo nutter, but hey! He still wins on a technicality!



# Big in Japan

John Ricciardi. Still in Japan, still making us all jealous. Here are his words.

## Girls of Tokyo Game Show 2003

SPECIAL EDITION II TURBO EX ALPHA

Last month, thousands of hardcore gamers and a few-dozen jet lagged game journos made their way to Chiba's Makuhari Messe Convention Center to check out all the latest booth bab... err, video games at the 2003 Tokyo Game Show. Sadly, Nintendo once again declined to participate (they like to be different), so the only games on display for GameCube and GBA were all from third parties like Square Enix, Capcom and Konami.

Despite the big N's absence, a few choice games made the trip worthwhile. Capcom showed off new footage of *Resident Evil 4* and *Killer 7* for GameCube, Square Enix unveiled *Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories* and *Slime Morimori Dragon Quest* for GBA and Sega had a near-finished *Phantasy Star Online Episode III*, among other bits and pieces.

But FORGET ALL THAT. We only had room on our digital camera for one thing and that's pictures of Japanese girls. We're sure the smiles mask some kind of shattering inner torment, but who cares! Show us the game lady, and we'll pretend to be interested while casting sly glances at your svelte, costumed form. Ba-boing! We're bad people. But we knew that already.



It's okay to choose which one you like best and mutter something rude. Totally fine



We're not sure what John showed her to elicit this kind of response. She looks scared

## ARREST THIS MAN

In order to spice up our time wandering around the TGS show floor, we hired some guy off the street to stalk booth workers with our Kenshin Dragon Quest sword from last month. He had far more fun than we did, until the Japanese police gave him a mad beating to the face with their sticks.



Attacking the chicken from *Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg*. "Roll this egg, you nobber!"

Fighting a 'lovely' female ninja (yes, the sword really does glow)



"Yank the whip! Crush his neck!" No, games haven't made us violent



# MOBILE SUIT GAMECUBE

Nintendo's line of decorator hardware continues this month with what are arguably the coolest models yet: the Char Aznable (of *Mobile Suit Gundam* fame) custom edition GameCube and Game Boy Advance systems. The GC comes with a special 'Secret Disc' and a killer Char Aznabel Zaku mech from the One-Year War, while the GBA comes with *SD Gundam G-Generation Advance*, the latest handheld *Gundam* strategy RPG. Both hit Japanese stores on November 27th. Dare to dream kids and you might get lucky. But we doubt it.



It's a red GBA SP. But it's not as cool as OUR red GBA SP. See p34 for the truth



## BOBBY TOKYO

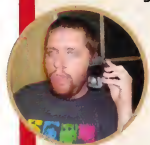


### JAPAN INSIDE

#### Nobody complained, so Bobby's back! He speaks the truth!

★ Hello to Japan! The cheque is come, so Bobby is have to tell more about Japan games! Do you see how GameCube is so, so no expensive? Bobby Japan learn a secret. The new GameCube is made of CAKES and BISCUITS. It look same yes and also play same games, but you can bite it. Bobby have not bite a GameCube, because man in shop call security when Bobby jab carving knife into display model. But is true, man who sleep in street and wear *Mario Kart* t-shirt tell Bobby. He is must be work for Nintendo.

★ Bobby see phone in shop called Nokia N-Gage. Ha, ha! Is very rubbish. To speaking, you are have to hold it SIDEWAYS ON FACE. It look like you are using phone for first time! Like you are from outer space and don't understand how phone work! Girls, they are look at you



and laugh like you are having the smallest manpart! A tiny, tiny one like maggots before is hatch into fly. To put rubbish *Tomb Raider* game inside, you have to complete break phone apart. Take battery out and everything. There is machine called Game Boy where games plug in top. Hello at Nokia? Have you ever seen these thing? Ha, ha.



★ Nintendo is make very realistic game about jungle ecology. Like how monkeys play bongos along to Japan pop music when hunter man is not there. Is called *Donkey Konga*, and Bobby Japan is have played it so much. Is really making you feel like a monkey. After Bobby get great success on game, me have a brown toilets on the floor of games shop and throw it at man walking past. It was half runny poos and make big mess. Bobby forget what he had touch and pick some noodle out of teeth. It was very disgust. The taste is not go away.

★ Speaking of bad taste, have you see *FIFA 2004*? For God's sake, why do all the white people is look the same? Me can see a Beckham for sure, but all of rest is same round-eye person. If you look at Japan team, is like eleven photographs. So realistic. Nakata, Inamoto – if I was lady I could play the game for like love reasons. Zoom-in on legs and groin vicinity with secret camera option and then use C-Stick to try and look up Nakata shorts when is stretching for slide tackle.

★ That is all right now! Bobby is must to play *Donkey Konga* some more. Sayonara!



### JAPAN TOP TEN

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending October 5th

1	Legendary Starfy 2	(Nintendo, Game Boy Advance)
2	Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour	(Nintendo, GameCube)
3	Zettai Zetsumei Dangerous Jiisan	(Kids Station, GBA)
4	Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire	(Nintendo, GBA)
5	Pokémon Pinball: Ruby & Sapphire	(Nintendo, GBA)
6	Sword of Mana	(Square Enix, GBA)
7	Naruto: Kinoha Senki	(Tomy, GBA)
8	Super Mario Advance 4	(Nintendo, GBA)
9	Tales of Symphonia	(Namco, GC)
10	Kirby's Air Ride	(Nintendo, GC)



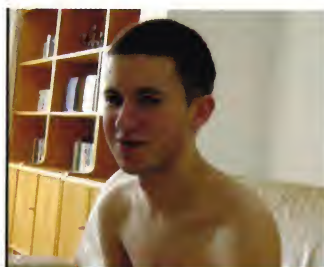
# Feedback Team

Instant reaction to this month's hot topics from people like you.

Want to have a go? Send your name, address, phone number and email address to *NOM UK's Feedback Team, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW*. Include a photo, preferably of you in clothes!



**FRANKLIN HUGHES, TRANMORE**



**IAN MARRIOTT, MANCHESTER**



**JASON WEMYSS, HIGH WYCOMBE**

## 1 SHOULD NINTENDO NOW DROP THE PRICE OF THE ORIGINAL GBA?

"Even if Nintendo did drop its price I feel more people will still be after the SP. Perhaps both should have a price drop, the fact that GC now costs less is odd. A price drop in the GBA games (and GC) is what we really need."

"Yeah! There are loads of people who would love to own a GBA or SP, but can't afford one. Why not make the older one cheaper so everyone can enjoy the brilliant games that are out?"

"No they shouldn't. With a not-so-large price difference between the SP and the original, more people will be buying the expensive piece of hardware over Christmas, bringing the Big N more money."

## 2 WHAT GAME ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT YEAR?

"I could think of a few, but if pushed then *Resident Evil 4*. I'm a big *Resi* fan and can't wait to play this game. *RE* is my fave series, each game is just a chapter of the big picture and I'm dying to find out what happens next."

"I'm really looking forward to *Pikmin 2*. The original is still one of my fave games on GameCube, but it was too short. Without the time limit and with a co-op mode this game is gonna last miles longer!"

"I'm interested in learning more about *Killer 7*. And being a realism fan I'm looking forward to seeing more of *Splinter Cell* on GC with *Pandora Tomorrow*. I also have high hopes for the next *Bond* instalment."

## 3 SHOULD THERE BE MORE PLAYER'S CHOICE TITLES?

"Why not? Cheaper games can only be a good thing. There are a number of games out now that I would like to have but can't afford. If they were cheaper it would make the burden on my wallet easier."

"Definitely! I think it's great that Nintendo is selling some of its best games dirt-cheap. *Metroid* for 20 quid – come on! *Wind Waker* needs to be next. What about a GBA Player's Choice range, though?"

"Player's Choice means games are wallet-friendly, but Nintendo should set standards that a game must achieve to gain the title. Only great games should get in – but more cheap classic games would be cool."

## 4 IF YOU WERE IN CHARGE AT NOE FOR A DAY, WHAT'S THE FIRST THING YOU'D DO?

"Nintendo don't spend enough on advertising. There are good ads for the 'Cube, but they're hardly ever on. I'd find out why this is. NoE seems to think the hardware and software will sell themselves."

"I'd get Shigsy on the phone and tell him that we NEED *Animal Crossing*! I've got it on import with a Freeloader and EVERY person I've shown it to has fallen in love with it. Sort it out Ninty!"

"I'd apply to NoA to take the UK into its gaming region for GC games, ensuring the UK would get earlier release dates and also allowing all those games like *Animal Crossing* that never seem to make it into our shops."

## 5 ARE THERE ANY EXCLUSIVE PS2/XBOX TITLES THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ON GAMECUBE?

"To be honest, not really. *Silent Hill* would be the only one I would want that comes to mind. Others will say *GTA*. I'm not bothered about this game, though I'm sure many others would love to see it on GameCube."

"Not a single one! GameCube has got it all! Platformers (*Mario*), RPG/adventure (*Zelda*), First Person Shooters (*Metroid*) There's even an exclusive *Resi* series! It doesn't get any better!"

"*Halo*, I want *Halo*! Sorry, did I say want? I meant I NEED *HALO*! *GTA* I can live without, but I have been assured by friends that *HALO* is the way to go and I'm not spending £99 on an X-Box just for one game."

## 6 WHAT'S THE MOST UNDERRATED GAMECUBE TITLE?

"*PN.03*. It's still a decent game for a quick laugh. Underrated by the public is *Viewtiful Joe*, this IS the game to own, but it seems like it's not selling enough as it should."

"I'd say *Luigi's Mansion*. So many people won't buy it because they've heard that it's "too short". But that's no reason to overlook an excellent game. It has such a great atmosphere!"

"*Enter The Matrix*... Yes, this game has many cut-scenes and the last level is impossible to fail on any difficulty setting, but the pros far outweigh any cons. The characters are brilliant."



THE SANDS OF TIME™



**GAME BOY ADVANCE**

PC CD-ROM



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# Hardware

Games are software. Here you'll find all the stuff that isn't.

★ CRAP ★★ NOT AS CRAP ★★★ AVERAGE ★★★★ WICKED ★★★★★ THE NUTS

TESTED TO DESTRUCTION

## Get behind the wheel!

GameCube steering wheels are cool, but never as good as the ones in the arcades... until now.

The Logitech Force Feedback Wheel is just like the ones used on those cool *Daytona USA* coin-ops – it shakes a jolt left and right in response to what's happening on screen.

It doesn't give you feedback on every game, only the ones that have been

programmed to use it. Fortunately, most of the latest and coolest racing games are compatible, so you can plug it in for the best driving experience in your living room.

Take turns at high speed and the wheel will be heavy to turn. Drive your car off a

ramp and feel the steering loosen as your vehicle flies through the air. You'll feel every bump in the road, every crash and, on some games, you'll even feel the surface of the road; asphalt, gravel, whatever. We put it to the test to see how it performs. Check it out!

### ■ F-ZERO GX

You can feel the rumble as you fire up your jets at the start of a race, or when you launch a Boost. Collisions with the wall and other vehicles throw the wheel in the opposite direction. Best played in the interior view.

★★★★



Logitech  
£49.99



### ■ MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!

Being hit by opponents' weapons send the wheel into a fit, like it wants to jump out of your hands. The wheel doesn't respond much to the road surface though and with no interior view, it takes some getting used to.

★★★



### ■ NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND

The wheel really comes to life. You'll feel EVERY last thing. Skid round a bend and the wheel turns the opposite way. Get hit on the right and it'll swing left. You'll even feel water on the road. Awesome!

★★★★★



### ■ DAKAR 2

It doesn't work that well with the bikes, but is great with the cars and trucks. You'll be able to tell what surface your driving on with your eyes closed. The resistance is so strong, your arms will get tired.

★★★★



### ■ BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

Equally as amazing as with *Need For Speed*. When you drive on the pavement you'll feel your wheels bump up the curb. Resistance changes with speed and you'll even feel it when you drive on the grass and gravel.

★★★★★



## Toys

Nintendo stuff that's too cool

These are every true Nintendo fan's wildest dream come true – radio-controlled Mario karts! Plug the kart into the controller for a 45-second electro-charging pit-stop and you can burn around for over two minutes at a time.

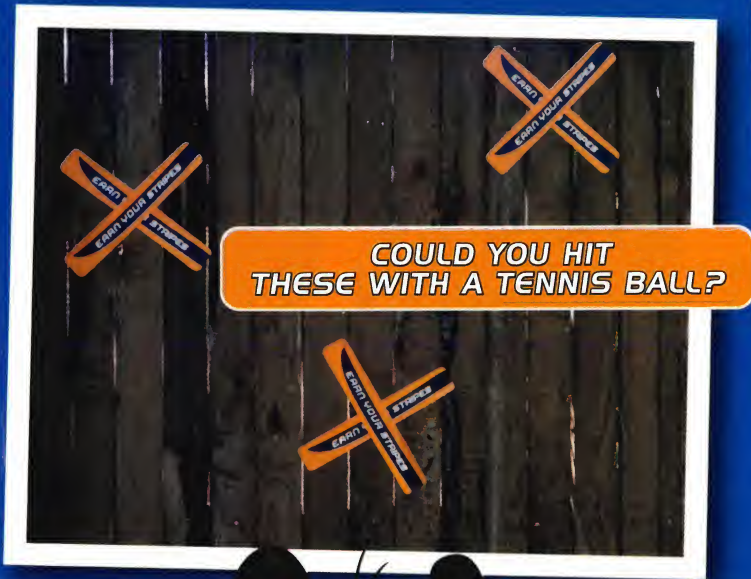
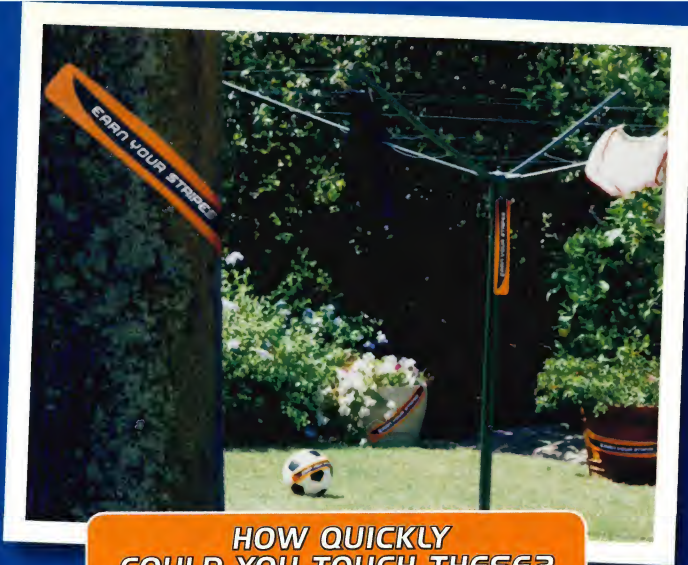
The remote has full controls; forward, reverse, left and right steering. Even better, each kart comes with plastic Red and Blue Shells, Bananas and a range of other cardboard items like Coins, item blocks, Lakitu's and race trophies.



on [www.lik-sang.com](http://www.lik-sang.com) for £20. Bargain!







Think you're up for these challenges?  
Good, get out there and prove it.  
Leap higher, jump further, run faster.

*Kellogg's*  
**FROSTIES**

EARN YOUR STRIPES



# The *NOM UK* Giveaway

Anyone for a *Double Dash*? You know you want it. YES YOU DO!

## COMPETITION 01

### FIVE Winners get:

- A GameCube
- *Mario Kart: Double Dash!!*
- A Logitech Force Feedback Steering Wheel

This game needs no introduction. The fact already stands – you need it in your life and this is your chance. Thanks to Nintendo, Christmas will come early for five lucky winners. But how's your Mario Kart knowledge? Let's put it to the test...

Text Keyword: 'KART'

Q. Which Nintendo character had his outline drawn as a track in *Mario Kart: Double Dash!!*

- a. Yoshi b. Kamek c. Goomba



## COMPETITION 02

### Five copies of *The Fifth Element* Special Edition DVD

We've got five copies of *The Fifth Element Special Edition* DVD, out on 24th November, courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.

Text Keyword: 'ELEMENT'

Q. Milla Jovovich has starred in which film of a video game?

- a. Super Mario Bros.  
b. Street Fighter  
c. Resident Evil



## ISSUE 133 WINNERS

### Competition 1

- Harold Bland, *Stenning*
- Stuart Rick, *Somercotes*
- Mark Tutin, *Collycroft*
- Tom Collins, *Langland*
- Annette Thomas, *Lakenham*

### Competition 2

- Michael Brown, *Chesham*
- James McLynn, *Hamwell*
- Lesley Attree, *Rye*

### Competition 3

- William Ashton, *Cynloed*
- Christopher Brown, *Ashington*
- Renate McKenzie-Ohah, *Leicester*
- D. Lee, *Stowmarket*

## HOW TO ENTER

### By phone

Dial 0905 053 110, then add the number of the competition on the end. So, if you're entering the *Mario Kart* competition, dial 0905 053 1101, answer the question and leave your name, address and telephone number. You could be a winner!

### By post

Write the competition number clearly at the top of the envelope or postcard. So, if you're entering the *Fifth Element* competition, write to: Competition 2, *Nintendo Official Magazine UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW.

### By text message

Text the words nomcomp 'keyword' and your answer to 83149. So, if you want to enter the *Mario Kart* competition, type nomcomp 'kart' then the letter of your answer. Unfortunately, this service is not available for users of the Virgin network.

**IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ!** All entries for these competitions must be received by 11/12/2003 to qualify.



**Next Month**

# FREE Ninflatable Punchable!

**GET IT  
DEC 12th  
ONLY  
£3.50**

**LOOK!**

Ever wanted to beat up one of Nintendo's hardest enemies? Well, pick up next month's **NOM UK** 'cos you'll get a cool Ninflatable Punchable. There are three to collect, including Bullet Bill, Bowser and Ganondorf!

**PLUS!**

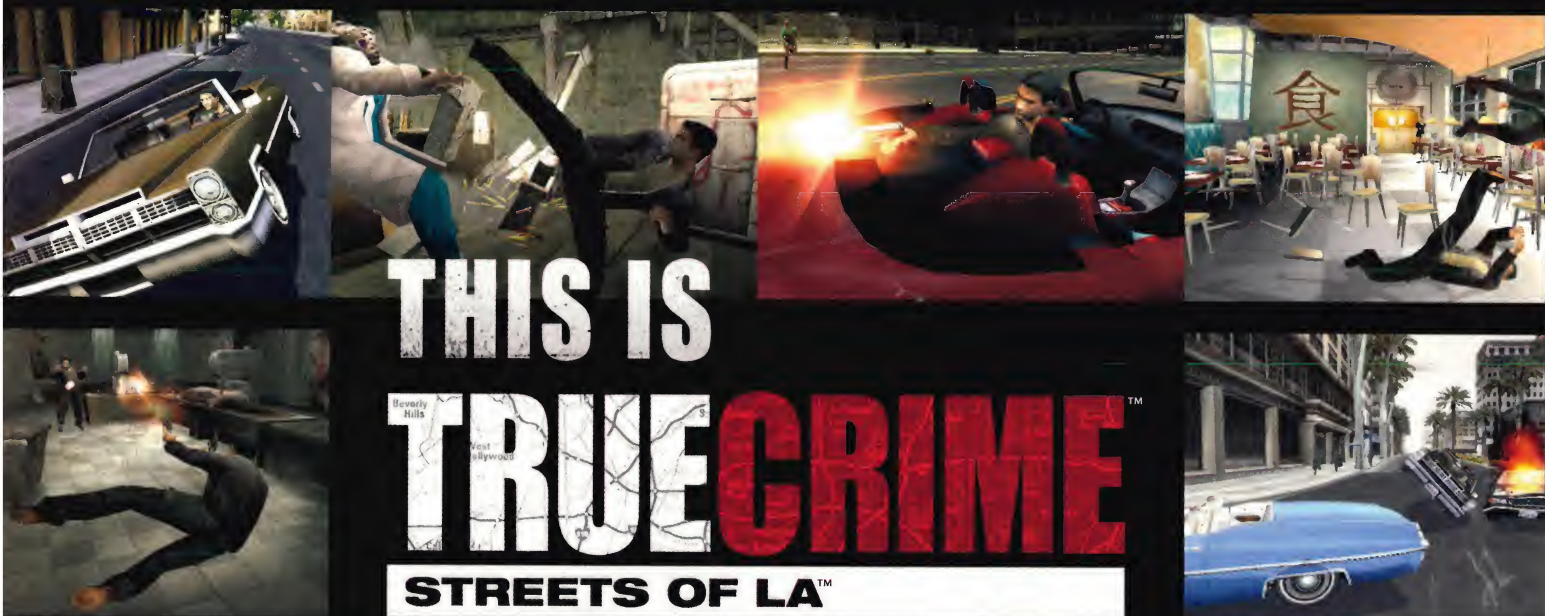
## Pokémon Colosseum

The new monsters as you've never seen them before!

**TONS MORE!**

- **Mario Party 5** – is this the last roll of the dice?
- **True Crime reviewed!**
- **Mario & Luigi** – the best handheld game ever?
- **Medal of Honor: Rising Sun** – eat some lead, Johnny Foreigner!





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PlayStation 2



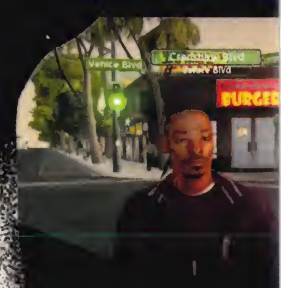
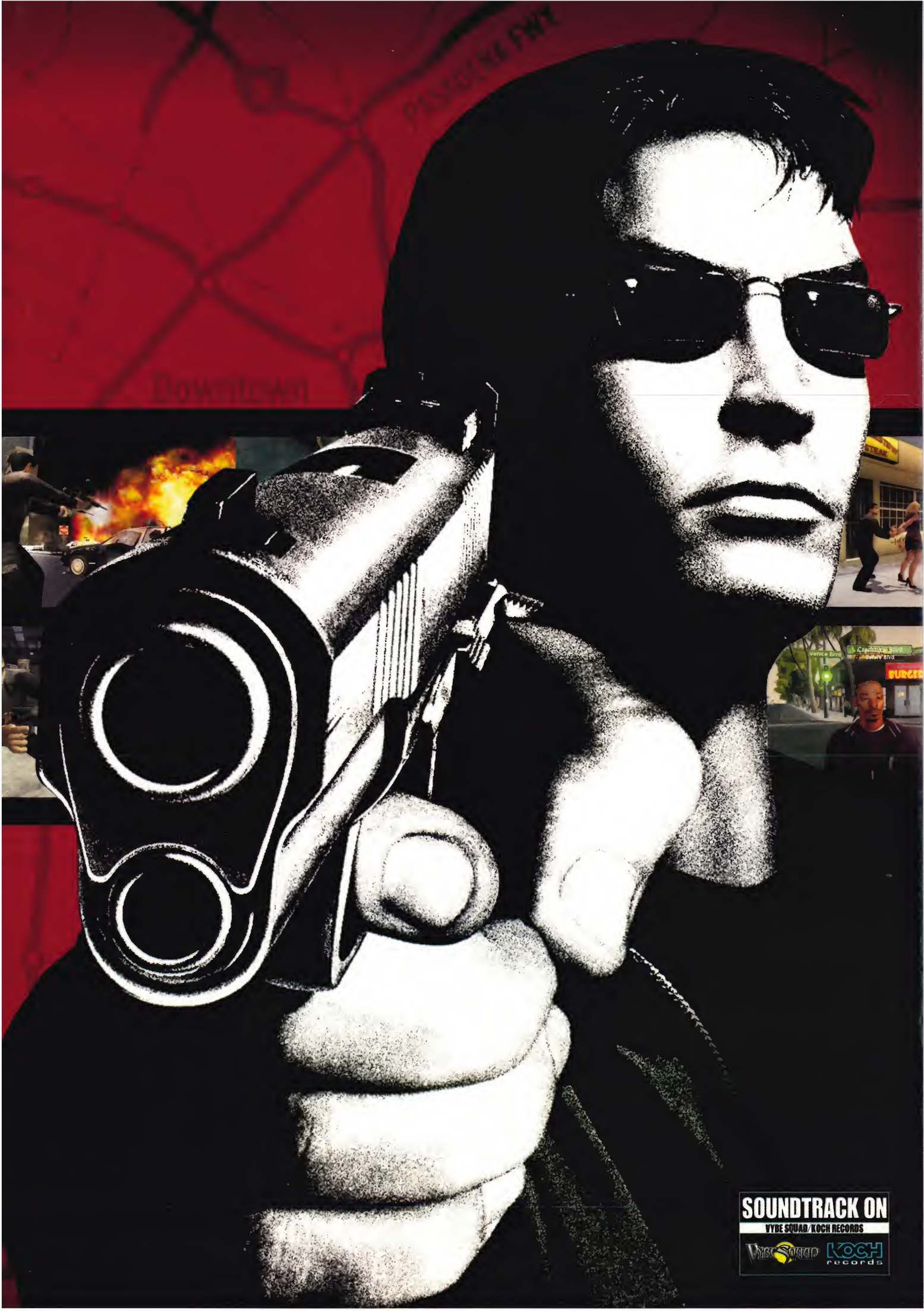
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**SOUNDTRACK ON**  
VIBE SQUAD / KOCH RECORDS  
 



**T**he *NOM UK* phone rings. It's a Capcom PR man: "We've got an interview for you". *NOM UK*: "Who's that then?" Capcom PR man: "Mr Inaba, y'know the *Viewtiful Joe* creator." *NOM UK*: "Sweet, we'll be there." The line goes dead. Ten days later we're there. Room 1,534 in the main hall at ECTS, huddled around a table at the back of the Capcom suite, next to the man from CVG and some oily-looking website boys from [www.no-one-reads-our-site.com](http://www.no-one-reads-our-site.com). Then in walks a cheery Mr Inaba – a bit of a newbie to *NOM UK* – and the man we'd come to meet. So, with the racket from the N-Gage stand to contend with and armed with some tough questions here's what happened when *NOM UK* met Inaba-san...

Interview by Tim Street

# Interview-a-go-go baby!

Capcom's Mr Original tells *NOM UK* all about *Viewtiful Joe*, why 2D is great and why he can't stick sequels.

***NOM UK:* Everyone was really surprised by *Viewtiful Joe* – by the look and feel of the game – but what was your inspiration for it?**

**Atsushi Inaba:** A long time ago in the 1960s and 1970s there were a lot of costume superhero shows in Japan. They called them Sentai shows [a Japanese word which means battle squad – *Ed*], something which a lot of people who know about anime and Japanese culture would know about. Basically this is where Joe comes from, but we've also blended in your typical American comic book superhero so it's a blending of both cultures.

***NOM UK:* Do you think there's loads of room left for development within the 2D genre which has been pushed aside due to the massive amount of 3D games? Is there still a lot we can do with it and will you be making more 2D games?**

**AI:** Up until now you've played a lot of 2D games – the Super Nintendo, the Nintendo era is full of 2D games, so we've seen it all, we've done it all in 2D. By that meaning it's going to be hard to bring out new games that are original and fun. However, with *Viewtiful Joe* we've been able to bring life to the genre because we use it in a realistic way that hasn't been done before.

It would be possible for more 2D games to come out, but it depends on how creative the producers of the games can actually be. If you make a game like

*Viewtiful Joe* that's stylistic and fun yet still 2D I'm sure there can be lots more 2D games out there. However, very few people actually implement that kind of style and fun into a 2D game anymore and make it seem original.

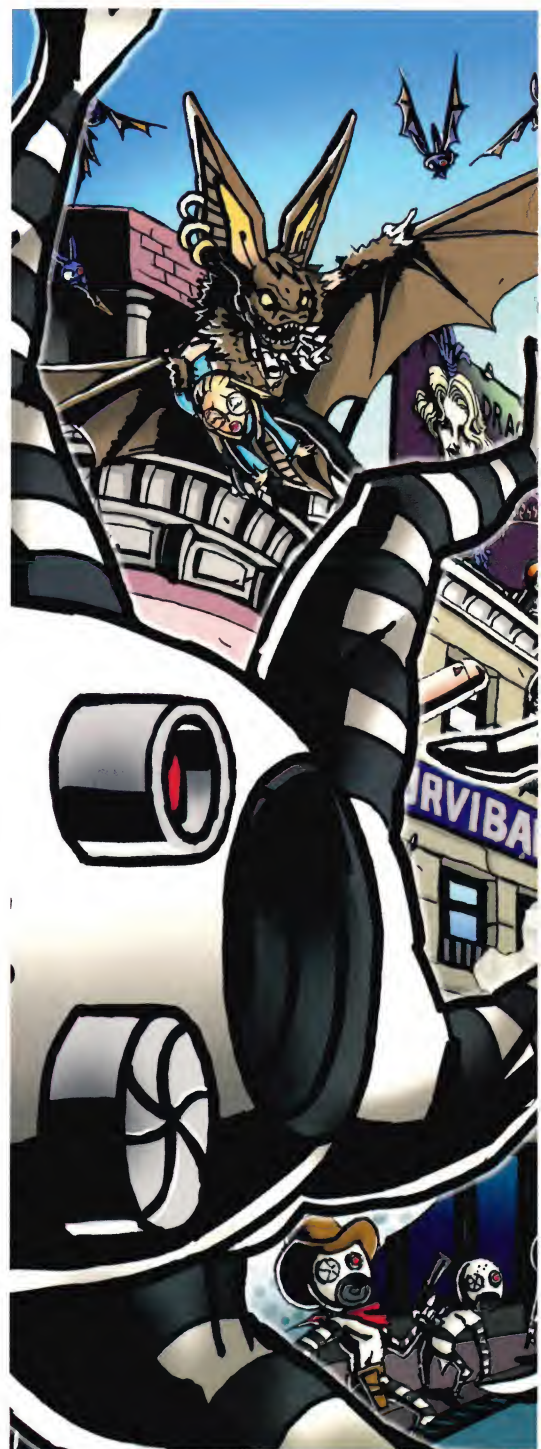
***NOM UK:* What did you want to achieve with the design of *Viewtiful Joe*?**

**AI:** Whenever you are making a game you need to do one of two things: either make sure the game is unique and original enough to capture the consumers' interest or make sure the graphics are interesting enough so that people can take one look at it and say "Oh wow, that's interesting. Let me see what kind of game that is". With *Viewtiful Joe* we wanted to do both – that's why you have such an original unique game that uses unique graphics as well. Especially nowadays it's really important to be able to go in and grab the consumer and make them really interested in the game. You have to have something original.

***NOM UK:* What part of the game are you most proud of?**

**AI:** It's a game that you can watch people play and yet it's still fun. Like for example you could be playing and I could just be watching, but I would still have a good time watching you play it because it's still cool to look at. That's my favourite part of the game.

***NOM UK:* We know exactly what you**



**mean. What would you say was the biggest challenge in making *Viewtiful*?**

**AI:** If you're just going to make a normal action game with punching and kicking then it would just be the same old thing over and over again, so we really had to put a lot of effort into implementing the VFX abilities. That meant implementing the Slow, the Mach Speed and the Zoom-In abilities to a point where it's actually fun to use them.

***NOM UK:* So, what games have you been playing recently?**

**AI:** It would be *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker* – the first half, not the whole game. The first half was fun, the second half was not.

**WITH VIEWTIFUL JOE  
WE'VE PUT LIFE  
BACK INTO 2D GAMES.**





**NOM UK:** When do you know if your games are innovative or just old?

**AI:** I like to make fun and decent games. When I'm making it of course I think these are not hot games or interesting games and just about the only time you can actually tell whether they're interesting or merely odd is by playing them. And I feel if anybody was to pick up the controls and play this through, that they would know. It's not odd, it's fun.

**NOM UK:** It's a relatively new phenomenon, but do you see a real future in online gaming?

**AI:** In the end, online games will get very big. But right now I don't have much interest in them. There are too many

limitations. I think in about two years' time online games will be big enough and actually worth developing for, but at the moment it's still too small.

**NOM UK:** Finally, what's your opinion on a *Viewtiful Joe* sequel?

**AI:** There were some things we couldn't get in that we really wanted to, so we still have a feeling that it's not 100%. Therefore we want to try making a sequel eventually. But that's not official that we are definitely making one. It would be nice to make a sequel to put in all the things we couldn't this time. But as you know, once you make a sequel you make another sequel and so on – and that makes it... yawn! That's boring to me.

**GAMES MUST BE UNIQUE AND VISUALLY BOLD. WE DID BOTH.**





*out november 28*

**1080°<sup>™</sup>**  
**AVALANCHE**



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www.pegi.info

***mountain's gotta getcha***

"Shows the young upstarts how a snowboarding game should really be done." GAMES TM



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# Bigger. Better. Smarter. Previews

## Made in Wario

p58

"It'll take a straight jacket to keep you away from this!"

READ  
IT FIRST!  
READ IT  
NOW!



Mike



This month I've been playing this lot to death...

- Mario Kart: Double Dash!!
- Made in Wario
- Ikaruga
- Animal Crossing

Tim



This month I've been playing this lot to death...

- Mario Kart: Double Dash!!
- FIFA 2004
- Made in Wario
- Viewtiful Joe

Dom



This month I've been playing this lot to death...

- Tony Hawk's Underground
- Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004
- XIII
- Prince of Persia

LOADS MORE!

True Crime: Streets of L.A. p50

Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes p64

Tales of Symphonia p66

Top Gear Rally p69

Tak and the Power of Juju p70

Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy p76

Kingsley



This month I've been playing this lot to death...

- Star Wars Rebel Strike
- Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004
- Mario Kart: Double Dash!!
- Asteroids

Dean



This month I've been playing this lot to death...

- Mr. Driller: Drill Land
- Made in Wario
- Billy Hatcher
- Metroid Prime





# Made in a loony bin

The brand-new *Wario Ware* game for GameCube is not what we wanted. But we don't care!

**T**he GBA's *Wario Ware* is one of the nuttiest, but most addictive games ever. The graphics are simple and the gameplay is basic, but have one go and you're hooked. You'll want just one more try and still be there five hours later.

Think of how amazing a new GameCube *Wario Ware* game could be. It could expand on the same three-second games idea, with mini 3D-games and maybe exploit GameCube's controller to amazing effect.

*Made in Wario* is not that. Instead, it is a multiplayer version of the GBA game, with a few new mini-games thrown in. Rip off? Not really – the Japanese are picking them up for the equivalent of about £20. Is it a big disappointment? Maybe, but only because if you have the GBA version you'll have played most of the mini-games already, so there's little new challenge. Otherwise, you are in for a wild time.

### MADE IN WARIO

Before, you could only play alone, but plug in four controllers and the GameCube version offers up a range of some of the wackiest multiplayer frolics you could imagine. But there are many variations of multiplayer games in there, some open from the start and others that need to be unlocked by playing the single-player mode.

The first we saw was like a head-to-head dance-off. Two to four players pick a character from the *Wario Ware* party, which can then be seen dancing on a stage. A spotlight will wander around the screen before stopping on one or

more of the players, which triggers a mini-game. Depending on the game, players will either go head-to-head or take turns to complete the game and get points.

Another was like a game of distraction, where one person plays a mini-game with the other three players' characters appearing on screen and running around to distract the person trying to complete their task. Players take turns to play the game.

In another mode, players wait to play one mini-game after each other. Whilst one person plays the game, the others have to mash away at the **A** button to pump up a balloon. The mini-games



Player one jumps the hurdle. Player two blocks their view. It looks rubbish. It isn't!



So that's what happened to R.O.B., trapped in Wario's mental home for useless robots



Pick up the rabbit and drop it in the abattoir



## Wario excites

If you want to get an idea of what *Made in Wario* is like, get on the Net, go to [www.nintendo.co.jp](http://www.nintendo.co.jp) and take a look at the Japanese commercials. You'll find small clips of that crazy lot shouting as they play the game in four-player mode. There's even a bit when an old bloke goes nuts to the *Mario Bros.* mini-game. It's hilarious.



Four girls. In a room. Playing games. With each other. It can't be real...



... but they seem to like it. Especially the crazy hat dude at the back

**"We were disappointed to find GBA mini-games, but now we don't care, this game is hilarious."**



Pick one of these wacky characters, quick!



We kept pressing A. We kept losing. Why?!



rotate around the players until the balloon pops and the player playing the mini-game at that moment loses.

There are many more in there, some requiring co-operation between players, but everything we've seen up to now has been a great laugh. Remember that GBA mini-game where you have to tap **A** to make a little man skip over a spinning rope. Here, you can play with four little men, one for each player, all skipping simultaneously. Or that paper-plane flying game? On GameCube, you can race four of them around.

Even if there's just two of you, it's brilliant fun and with a full party of four you'll have a riot, screaming and shouting at each other as you try to battle your way through the manic mini-games.

The single-player mode has a few extras in it as well. If you're a bit rubbish at one of the games and fancy some practice, you can get instant access to it and play it as many times as you like on any difficulty setting.

But instead of it being just a typical boring practice mode, the game will reward you with trophies for completing a game several times without losing and keep a record of all your best achievements. The best thing is, you don't need to have completed a game in the normal single-player mode before accessing it individually here. They're all open straight away.

## Essentials

**The developer:** Nintendo  
**What it's done:** *Wario Ware Inc.: Minigame Mania* (issue 129, 93%)

**Multiplayer:** Four players  
**Connectivity:** you can use the GBA as a controller  
**The publisher:** Nintendo  
**Release:** TBC

**Review:** if and when it gets a UK release date

### Predicted score

The initial disappointment of this not being a proper GameCube version soon wore off as it turned out to be an awesome party game. If it's released here at a budget price, it'll be worth a look.

NOM UK Predicts

**80%+**

■ **If I've already played the GBA, won't it be a bit boring?**

It will if you don't have any friends interested in playing multiplayer. You will already be a master at most of the one-player mini-games and you wouldn't find it challenging at all. It'd be a waste of money. Get some mates that are up for a laugh and we think this'll be worth more than twenty quid.

■ **That's cool, but I can't help thinking there's no chance of this ever coming out over here.**

It is quite a quirky, 'Japanese' sort of game, but then so is *Wario Ware* on the

■ **Have the graphics been improved?**

We haven't managed to spot any graphical differences between this and the Game Boy Advance version at all. In fact, each time you start a challenge, you see a GBA bounce onto the telly and the camera zooms-in on a GBA screen. So, that basically sums it up. A couple of the new mini-games look a little better than the GBA originals, but nothing revolutionary. There are also some colourful cut-scenes that you can unlock by playing the one-player mode, but we can't figure out what they're about, because it's all wacky Japanese stuff.



**Trust me, I've played it**

We spent weeks trying to get the highest score in *Wario Ware* on GBA and that wasn't even a true multiplayer game. So, you can imagine how awesome it is to finally be able to link-up four players on a GameCube version. Lunchtimes just aren't long enough.

upside-down turtles. This is the *NOM* UK favourite at the moment. The rivalry between us always escalates to shouting within seconds. Nobody can take Dean's crown at the skipping game, though.

■ **... and the worst bit?**

The initial disappointment of realising the majority of the mini-games have been ripped straight from the GBA version. But accept that fact and there's plenty of fun to be had. In fact, we don't even care now, this game is hilarious and you have to have a go – trust us.

GBA and that came out. To be honest, we're a little doubtful too, but we've got our fingers crossed. And if it does come out here, hopefully it'll be a budget priced game like it is in Japan. GameCube games for £20 is the way forward. The moment we get a sniff of an official UK release date, we'll let you know. Until then, get some practice in on the GBA version.

■ **What is the best bit?**

Any of the games that allow you all to play at the same time, like the skipping and paper-plane racing. There's also a game where you have to balance on





# 240 miles of monotony?

If you were already planning to buy this then hold on there good buddy, you'll need to wait for our review.

**B**efore we begin we must stress that this is only a preview version of the game. It's certainly nowhere near finished, at least it better not be – and for that we can perhaps excuse a lot of the failings that we've uncovered. But it has to be said that on first inspection this is more like *Driver* on PSone than some mighty next-gen *GTA*-beater.

There is good stuff in here. The story line and

voice acting is very well done. Characterisation is strong and the opening few movies are packed with a sense of realism and some sharp dialogue. You find yourself trying to work out who's the big name behind the faces, which is good fun although it's horrifying when you realise that the mighty Christopher Walken is lending his voice to some overweight

## The holiday that lasts for ever

If you've ever been to LA LA land on your hols, this'll be like reliving those sun-baked, gun-toting days

*True Crime*'s layout is an exact replica of actual LA streets and if you've been before you'll instantly recognise loads of the street names and places. We spent a good few hours just cruising the streets looking for places we'd been while we were out at E3. The one thing

that's missing is all of the licences for the various places. If there's a petrol station there in real life, there's one on the game, but it has no branding, which is a real shame. And we reckon 40 quid is a lot to spend just to get hold of a digital LA route planner.



This is where E3 takes place every May. It's bloody massive it is!



Here's the lovely area where Tim and Dom rested their weary heads



Rodeo Drive, the most expensive street in the city. This is where Dean stayed!

## TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF L.A.



Grab the criminals and dish out Chinese burns



This all started when we bought the last pack of Wether's at the petrol station

desk jockey with thinning hair and specs. Not cool at all, Chris.

But the kindly old fart is good enough to give you a couple of hand cannons and let you loose on the range. Aiming the weapon is automatic, but Nick is slow to react when changing targets. Firing is tiresome as you can't simply hold your finger on the trigger or you go into first-person aiming mode so you have to wallop the right trigger for all your worth to score a hit.

After you're done here you can jump in the car and tank off down the street, heading for the next point in the story. The cars handle reasonably well and there are obvious differences between a large family saloon and a hot hatch. As you drive around you'll also receive calls informing you of minor crimes taking place all over the city. It's up to you whether you want to investigate them or not.

And this is where our biggest bugbear comes in to play. You have a rating in the bottom corner, a good cop/bad cop meter. If you kill anybody, including criminals, then you lose a point. If you manage to apprehend suspects and put the cuffs on them then you gain a point and this affects the way the story pans out. When you're dealing with joyriders, marital disputes or stolen property this is fine. You can whip out your kung fu skills, knock the perps to the floor and slap on the bracelets. But when you're faced with an armed assailant things deteriorate. If





Tailing other vehicles at a safe distance is our favourite-ever thing in games



➤ you try and kick them, they shoot you, even when they're reloading you can't seem to hit them and once the new clip's in the gun they shoot you again. Your only option is to shoot back, but then they die and you lose points. How are you supposed to get around that?

*True Crime* has good parts and is in essence a good game, but it seems to have been fitted together in some Frankenstein fashion so as to create an experience that's unsatisfying and frustrating. There's still time to improve the basics, but from what we've seen this is going to need some serious spit and polish if it wants to steal *GTA's* bad-boy crown.



## Essentials

**The developer:** Luxoflux  
**What it's done:** *Vigilante 8* (N64, issue 80, 83%), *Vigilante 8 Second Offense* (N64, issue 91, 88%), *Star Wars Demolition* (PSone and Dreamcast)  
**Multiplayer:** No  
**Connectivity:** No  
**The publisher:** Activision  
**Release:** It's out now!  
**Review:** Next issue when we finally get a finished copy

### Predicted score

Don't buy this game until you've read our review next month. From what we've seen it needs a lot of work and we're not sure there's enough time to do it. Go and get *Mario Kart* instead, for the time being.

NOM UK  
Predicts

65%+

faithfully recreated. It's immense fun having a nose into all of the nooks and crannies of the city and it means you'll never get ripped off by an LA cabby again.

### ■ And the worst bit?

Basically the rest of it. This is so unfinished it hurts. Everything jars together with no sense of fluidity or continuity, and there are loads of flaws in the combat and apprehension of criminals. We still want this to be good, we really do. We're crossing our fingers that Luxoflux can grab a glorious victory from the jaws of defeat.

about consequence or retribution (which is another problem entirely, seeing as you're supposed to be a cop). Car handling is pretty good and there's a decent sense of speed.

### ■ What has gone wrong then?

I have no idea. We can cross our fingers and hope that the final code has all of these bugs ironed out. The sad thing is that many of you will have parted with your hard-earned dosh before you can find out the truth.

### ■ What's the best moment?

It has to be seeing so much of LA

together in the vain hope it will form a decent game.

### ■ It just sounds like it's not finished.

Well it's not, but there are more underlying problems than that. The draw distance is shocking, the graphics and animation are rinky in many parts, the fighting boils down to bashing buttons and praying you land a hit and using the gun feels very awkward.

### ■ Are there any redeeming features?

The driving is okay, especially the ability to jump in the car and race around the streets without worrying

### ■ You promised us it was good, slag!

Let's get this straight, *True Crime: Streets of LA* isn't disastrously bad. There's a real sense of freedom: you can pretty much drive around the streets as much as you like checking out the scenery and planning the best route from Hollywood to Santa Monica Boulevard. The story line is also fairly interesting.

### ■ So what's your problem then?

It feels like it's been put together by a troupe of trained monkeys. There's no fluidity to the game; it feels like everything's just loosely tacked



Trust me, I've played it

I know what I said in *NOM UK* 132, and I really did play it – but obviously just the palatable bits, those fit for journalistic consumption. It's only now that the hideous truth comes out. It's not that bad, honest, it's just we were expecting a lot better.



# BANJO IS BACK



90% NGC

**'GO BUY NOW.  
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**CONFIDENTIAL**

# Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes

You don't get GIVEN information like this. You have to TAKE it and hope you don't get caught...



## KNOW YOUR ENEMIES

By no means a comprehensive list, but here are a few of the characters you'll need to be aware of well in advance...

### PSYCHO MANTIS!



Well, there he is. One of the most feared enemies in the new game. It's a wonder we snapped him, since he spends most of his time cloaked in invisibility. Anyway, here's what we know...

#### DOSSIER

Born in Eastern Europe, he developed talents for psycho telepathy and telekinesis. His mother died in childbirth and his father was killed at home in a fire started by Mantis – he'd felt the hate his father had for him after his mother's death.

He was a member of the KGB Psychic Intelligence Unit. Throughout the Cold War he attempted to steal Western intelligence by extrasensory means. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, he emigrated to America and joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation as a psychic profiler.

He left the FBI to travel internationally as a freelance espionage agent before being recruited by Fox-Hound as an intelligence specialist.

#### HOW TO BEAT HIM

He's a mind reader, so you need to find some way of subverting the messages you're sending into your GameCube through the controller. Hmm, there are four different controller ports...

### LIQUID SNAKE!



Who wants to be a billionaire? Liquid does! He's got a big part to play in this plot to wreck Metal Gear Rex on the world. His ransom is set at one billion dollars. He's also head of the Kasatka terrorist group.

#### DOSSIER

Born in America and given to the British government to measure effects of surroundings and inherited traits.

Highly trained in various combat styles and strategic planning. Knows several languages, including English, French, Spanish, Malay and fluent Arabic.

Youngest British Special Air Service volunteer. Deployed to Middle East in his late teens as part of NATO operation to destroy Iraqi mobile launchers of Scud missiles. Also a member of the British Secret Intelligence Service – acted as a sleeper in the Middle East for espionage and destruction activities. Captured there and brainwashed, he was used for terrorist activities for three years before being rescued by American forces.

#### HOW TO BEAT HIM

Liquid's a traditional type of soldier. There will be no sniper stand-off, no sneaky stealth kills. Nope, just bare-chested, bare-knuckle rucking on a precarious platform. Maybe you could try booting him over the edge?

### METAL GEAR REX!

Funnily enough, it's pretty tricky to get hold of any photos of this top-secret, highly illegal, nuclear-powered attack tank. But there it is. Ordinarily it'd take a whole army to stop it, but you've got to try and do it on your own. Umm... great.



#### HOW TO BEAT IT

Well, you're going to need to whip out the biggest gun you have. That'll be the Stinger, a portable missile launcher with plenty of punch. The Stinger is a lock-on weapon, so you need to find this monstrosity's weak spot first. Based on our early reconnaissance reports, we'd suggest that the canister object on its left shoulder might be a good bet.

## YOUR ALLIES

You're not alone, soldier. These guys will keep you company. Unless you die, of course...

### OTACON

SNAKE's in constant Codec contact with his closest ally on the Metal Gear mission. His full name is Hal Emmerich, but the nickname sounds much cooler.



#### DOSSIER

Father committed suicide, and stepmother and stepsister lived in England. His grandfather was involved in atomic weapons research during World War II. He was born on the day of the Hiroshima bomb.

He was an engineer for the defence contractor that developed Metal Gear Rex and pioneered stealth camouflage technology. Led the construction team, but was unaware of Rex's real purpose. He was captured and forced to arm Rex for a nuclear launch.

#### CAN HE BE TRUSTED?

Absolutely. Otakon is too wimpy to get one over on Solid Snake. He feels guilty about the power of Rex and is desperate to disarm it.

### Gen. CAMPBELL

Despite being the man responsible for dropping Snake on Shadow Moses Island to sort out the Metal Gear mess, little is known about Campbell. It's not military protocol to start asking questions about those in power.



#### DOSSIER

A four-star general and the Marines' most senior officer. Also a member of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, which means he helps advise the President in shaping the overall military. He has commanded expeditionary units and graduated from Marine Corps War College.

#### CAN HE BE TRUSTED?

He seems to be asking Snake to do some pretty odd things. And the strategy and motivation just seems a bit... questionable. Best advice: be on your guard when dealing with this man.





# A symphony that sings

GameCube's first original, single-player RPG promises to be a rollicking good ride.

## TALES OF SYMPHONIA

**E**ver heard of the *Tales Of...* games? If not, we certainly don't blame you – Namco hasn't seen fit to bring any instalment of their bestselling Japanese RPG series to the UK. The series got its start with *Tales of Phantasia* on the Super NES, but quickly moved to the PSone after Nintendo and Namco had a bit of a falling out. The series stayed Sony-exclusive for years, but now that Nintendo and Namco are getting all chummy-chummy again (witness *Pac-Man*, *Star Fox 2* and *Donkey Konga*), the fifth instalment is GameCube-exclusive. And thus did *Tales of Symphonia* enter our lives.

Like most RPG series that launched before

*Final Fantasy VII*, the first PlayStation *Tales* games looked like extremely gorgeous 2D Super NES projects. But by the third game, *Tales of Eternia*, Namco had seen the writing on the wall and added 3D maps and full voice acting. The series was kept manga-styled, though, in sharp contrast to the ultra-realistic *Final Fantasy* games. This is not to say that *Symphonia* is a graphical lightweight – the cast look like a gaggle of manga characters brought to life, which is quite an artistic achievement.

The rest of the graphics hold up, generally, although there are a few glitches here and there. You can't see where you're going thanks to a nasty

camera angle on the world map screen, and some of the monster graphics on the maps are pretty ugly. But you know what? It's just nice that you can actually see the monsters on every map – no random battles means you can avoid enemy encounters when you really need to and seek them out when you want to level-up.

The battle engine, as well, is quite different from the *Final Fantasy* norm. Yes, your characters mostly just either attack, use magic or items, or defend. But once you enter the battle screen, it's all real-time – you control your main character and use all sorts of different attacks that you learn and assign to the **A** and **B** buttons. **B** button techniques use up Tech Points, but those are regained easily by using regular attacks for a short while.

The real strategy is learning how to string combos together and do serious



Lead your party of generic, spikey insect monsters against the weird hair mob! That's right, isn't it?

**"The cast look like a gaggle of manga characters brought to life."**



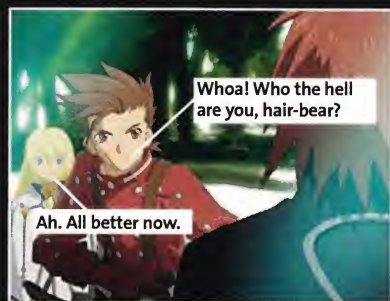
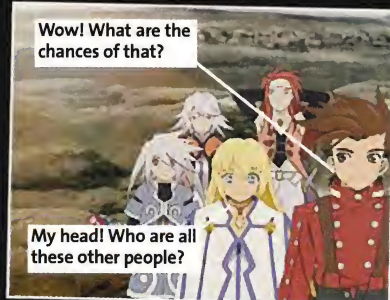
Mr Hair Spray looks on sympathetically as Squint Girl waffles. Shall we cut to levelling-up?





## Exclusive tale!

You won't find this on your DVD.  
NOM UK unearths an unseen plot!



damage without letting the enemy get any attacks in, which means that battles are never a boring, hold-down-the-button-mindlessly type of affair.

Meanwhile, your support characters all act on their own. You can't directly control their actions, but you can set their parameters individually outside of battle, telling them how to react.

For a boss fight, you might want them to spend all their Tech Points on their strongest attacks, but when simply roaming around the map, you don't want them going to waste. Of course, sometimes you'll need to have characters use their specific abilities during battle – press **Y** and the battle will pause as you assign commands.

But what about the story, without which there would be no role to play in the game? It's yet another area in which *Symphonia* excels – the consistently entertaining narrative never drags. We don't find out much about the world the characters inhabit; mostly we learn all about the main characters themselves and watch their relationships and personalities develop. It's done with a maximum of comic relief; *Symphonia* is a laugh-out loud game, free from the angst-ridden self-obsessed seriousness of some other RPGs we could name.

However, until a formal announcement is made, there's no telling whether *Tales of Symphonia* will leave the confines of that tiny string of islands we all know and love. But it makes perfect sense – it's one of this hardware generation's best RPGs, which is saying a lot – and it's GameCube exclusive, too.

## Essentials

**The developer:** Namco

**What it's done:** Some of the best stuff ever – *Pac-Man*, *Soul Calibur II*, *Donkey Konga*

**Multiplayer:** nah, that's in *Crystal Chronicles*, not this

**Connectivity:** sorry, no

**The publisher:** Namco

**Release:** only Japan for now

**Review:** slow down! We don't even know if it's coming over here yet!

### Predicted score

GameCube needs an original single-player RPG classic to call its own and *Tales of Symphonia* is about as good as they come. Expect great things if it turns up on this side of the planet.

NOM UK  
Predicts

85%+

### ■ Best part of the game?

I'm in love with the battle engine, because I'm a huge fan of action RPGs. I run a lot from *Final Fantasy* battles, but I purposefully run into enemies in *Symphonia* – the combo hack-and-slash action makes levelling-up so much fun.

### ■ ... and the worst?

The camera angles on the world map can get amazingly aggravating. I don't want to have to stare at a tiny map to figure out where I'm going just because the camera won't get behind my character and let me see the horizon. But that's a minor complaint, really.

### ■ Can I skip through all the story sequences? I hate reading.

You can whack **O** to skip even the voice-acted scenes, because they're all done in the in-game engine. Also, the interludes that pop up occasionally are all able to be skipped, because you have to press **O** to bring them up.

### ■ Is there any reason to watch them?

Absolutely – besides giving a lot more depth to the characters and containing some humorous lines, the cut-scenes usually pop up when you might need some in-game hints, like how to solve a puzzle or what town to travel to next.

RPG on the market and the story line is laugh-a-minute fun.

### ■ Are there lots of side-quests? I can't get enough side-quests!

Oh, you're in for a real treat, pal, because there's all kinds of crazy stuff you can do if you don't feel like adventuring. You can try a waitressing mini-game, or meet Wonder Chef's all over the world who'll teach you secret recipes, which you can then cook after battles to make super-healing items.

### ■ So it's all about food?

Umm... sort of, yeah.

systems and light-hearted, humorous story that entertains while not taking itself too seriously makes for a refreshingly good time.

### ■ How big is this series in Japan?

It's huge. The third in the series, *Tales of Eternia*, spawned an anime series, selling stacks of DVDs, soundtracks, telephone cards and whatever else they could slap the logo on.

### ■ Do the games live up to the hype?

Definitely. The fans are crazy for their beloved series for good reason. The gameplay engine holds up against any



Trust me, I've played it

This is actually my first *Tales* game – the first never made it out of Japan and the PSone instalments were rendered nearly invisible by *Final Fantasy*. But playing *Symphonia* made me realise how much I'd been missing out on its unique take on standard RPG battle



# FUNK UP YOUR PHONE



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## Polyphonics

FUNKY STEREO SOUND

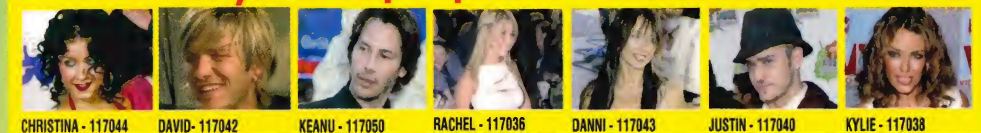
CHART MUSIC	ROCK MUSIC
Black Eyed Peas - Where is the Love	124454 Promises - Cooper T Clause
Beyonce feat Sean Paul - Baby Boy	124342 Silence Is Easy - Starsailor
Jamelia - Superstar	125020 Wildest Dreams - Iron Maiden
Rachel Stevens - My L.A. Ex	124368 Maps - Yeah Yeahs
The Darkness - Thing Called Love	123071 Numb - Linkin Park
Dido - White Flag	124529 Secret Kiss - The Coral
The Strokes - 12:51	125085 The New Hit - Marilyn Manson
S Club 8 - Sundown	125116 Whos The Daddy - Love Bug
Texas - Carnival Girl	125279 Someday - Nickelback
Fast Food Rockers - Say Cheese	124648 Like A Rap - Audioslave
Big Brovaz - Baby Boy	101293 R A S T E
Blondie - Good Boys	124318 Without Me - Eminem
Blu Cantrell/Sean Paul - Breathe	125058 No Flow - Big Brovaz
Suede - Attitude	125666 Stan - Eminem
Amy Studt - Under The Thumb	125316 Real Slim Shady - Eminem
Scooter Vs Acardipane - Maria	124358
Elvis Presley - Rubberneckin'	124635
Travis - Re-offender	125315
Elton John - Ready For Love	121707
Funeral For A Friend - Daytime TV	125667
FOOTBALL	NEW RELEASES
Arsenal - Amazing Reds	122963
Villa - Holteenders In The Sky	122965
Chelsea - Blue Is The Colour	122985
Everton - You Are My Everton	122993
Leeds - We Had Joy	122999
Liverpool - We All Live In A Red..	123009
Man City - Blue Moon	123013
Man United - Our Trophy Back	123017
Newcastle Utd - Blaydon Races	123027
Newcastle Utd - 1 Alan Shearer	123029
Southampton - When The Saints	123037
Spurs - We Are Tottenham	123041
Wolves - King Kenny Miller	123043
Wolves - Hey Jones 'E'	123045
We've Got That Double Feeling	123053
If You Know Your History	120601
The Liquidator	120616
Here We Go - Football Anthem	120495
Celtic - Fields of A'Ray	108273
Notts Forest - Land of Hope	108447
R N B	THEMES
Never Leave You - Lumidee	120905
Frontin' - Pharrell Williams	121675
Snake - R Kelly feat Tiger	120020
Crazy In Love - Beyonce	120012
21 Questions - 50 Cent	120009
No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder	120017
Hot In Herre - Nelly	108203
Cat Nobody - Kelly Rowland	116460
Mesmerize - Ja Rule & Ashanti	111684
Christina Aguilera - Dirty	107809
Craig David - What's Your Flava	107825
Kelly Rowland - Stole	107862
Nelly & Kelly Rowland - Dilemma	108310
	108213

## Ringtones

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Chart Tones	Top Sellers	Football Chants	TV Themes
Black Eyed Peas - Where is the Love	120393 Breathe - Blu Cantrell	120539 Arsenal - Vierra	122961 Kung Fu The Legend Continues
Beyonce feat Sean Paul - Baby Boy	122575 Xtm & Dj Chucky - On The Wings	116215 Arsenal - Amazing Reds	122963 CHiPS
Jamelia - Superstar	124982 Crazy In Love - Beyonce	120398 Aston Villa - Holteenders In The Sky	122964 SeaQuest Deep Sea Voyage
Rachel Stevens - My L.A. Ex	125017 Pretty Green Eyes - Ultraheat	122445 Aston Villa - My Old Man	110617 Space 1999
The Darkness - Thing Called Love	125120 Only Fools & Horses	101226 Aston Villa - Roll Along	122966 Transformers
Dido - White Flag	124530 Ready For Love - Elton John	121732 Blackburn - Wild Rover	108083 Spooks
The Strokes - 12:51	124989 Never Leave You - Lumidee	120369 Bolton - Run Run	111004 Trigger Happy TV
S Club 8 - Sundown	125311 Bring Me To Life - Evanescence	110559 Celtic - Fields of A'Ray	100381 Jackass
Texas - Carnival Girl	125661 Hollywood - Madonna	117377 Chelsea - Blue Is The Colour	122984 Malcolm In The Middle
Fast Food Rockers - Say Cheese	124646 U Make Me Wanna - Blue	111022 Chelsea - Super Franky Lampard	122986 The Osbournes
Big Brovaz - Baby Boy	110272 All Over - Lisa Maffia	112595 Chelsea - We are the famous CFC	122988 Sticking With You Hyundai Ad
Blondie - Good Boys	125660 In Da Club - 50 Cent	110993 Everton - He was Just 17 (Rooney)	122990 Phoenix Nights
Blu Cantrell/Sean Paul - Breathe	120539 James Bond Theme	100016 Everton - You Are My Everton	122992 Futurama
Suede - Attitude	125662 Hawaii 5.0 - Tv Theme	100690 Leeds - We Had Joy	122998 Charmed
Amy Studt - Under The Thumb	125313 Eye Of The Tiger - Rocky Theme	100687 Liverpool - You'll Never Walk Alone	123006 South Park Theme
Scooter Vs Acardipane - Maria	125663 Celtic - Fields Of Athanray	100381 Liverpool - We All Live In A Red..	123008 Itchy And Scratchy
Elvis Presley - Rubberneckin'	124657 Ignition - R Kelly	123012 Man City - Blue Moon	123012 The Simpsons
Travis - Re-offender	125312 The Simpsons Theme	123016 Man United - Our Trophy Back	123016 Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Elton John - Are You Ready For Love	121732 Great Escape Theme	100382 Man United - The Great Escape	123018 Scooby Doo
Funeral For A Friend - Daytime TV	125664 Make Luve - Room 5	111639 Middlesborough - Boro Till I Die	Movie Themes
	You Said No - Busted	122640 Newcastle Utd - Blaydon Races	A Clockwork Orange
	Knight Rider Theme	100131 Newcastle Utd - 1 Alan Shearer	120809
	Sweet Child - Guns N Roses	101084 Southampton - Mr Eriksson	120811
	Loneliness - Tomcraft	121714 Southampton - When The Saints	120822
	A Team - Tv Theme	100682 Spurs - We Are Tottenham	120836
	Italian Job - Film Theme	100691 Wolves - King Kenny Miller	120841
	Halloween - Theme	100048 Wolves - Hey Jones 'E'	120842
	Dambusters March - Film Theme	100703 There's Only One...	120843
	Flower Of Scotland - Anthem	100799 We've Got That Double Feeling	116230
	Don Give It To Ya - Dmx	100338 Here We Go	100665
	Jackass Theme	100708 Match Of The Day	100687
	Boys Of Summer - Dj Sammy	110619	100691
	Move Your Feet - Junior Senior	Dance	101158
	124553	Feel The Beat - Darude	Austin Powers
	124554	Silence - Delerium	Terminator 2
	124558	We Will Survive - Warp Brothers	Halloween
	124559	Right Here - Fatboy Slim	James Bond
	124560	Tocas Miracle - Fragma	Beverly Hills Cop
	124561	Thong Song - Sisso	100010
	124562	Better Of Alone - Alice Deejay	Hot R N B
	124563	Something - Lasgo	Put Him Out - Ms Dynamite
	124564	Clubbed To Death - Rob Dougan	108007
	124565	They Don't Know - So Solid Crew	107981
	124566	Lazy - X Press feat David Byrne	107993
	124567	Addicted To Bass - Puretone	107901
	124568	Star Guitar - Chemical Brothers	108072
	124569	U Girls Look So Sexy - Nush	101046
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			101880
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# Gnarly Brown

TOP GEAR RALLY

This sweet mud racer provides relief at a time of gastro-intestinal difficulty.

**S**ometimes it's a blessing when your guts are rank and everything you eat comes dripping out of your bum in liquid form. Well, the cramps aren't much fun, but you can indulge yourself in some peaceful, but foul-smelling, handheld gaming, free from interruption.

The best games are the ones that have you still perched on the porcelain throne long after the brown avalanche has ceased. Like *Top Gear Rally*. 3D racing games on GBA usually look as appealing as the content of the toilet bowl in this particular scenario – *Sega Rally* was proof of that. But here, you can actually see where you're going. The road is distinct from the scenery that whooshes past. It's a radical concept, we know. Actually, there are N64 racers that look worse than this.

But it's the handling here that pushes this firmly into the *V-Rally 3* bracket. The slip and slide of a souped-up rally car is captured perfectly and you have to really coax it through a powerslide to get the best times. There are seven other cars to race against, all given a convenient head start. So you're cornering like a ninja and also powering on hard for the top three finish you need to progress. It's a nice balance.

There are no real rally cars and the stages are

**"The slip and slide of a souped-up rally car is captured perfectly."**



Compete in the bizarre and frightening clown car event

all made up, but it doesn't matter. Snow is snow, it doesn't need to be in Sweden. We could do without the tactically-placed barriers that stop you dead like they're wrought out of iron and bolted into the ground, but that's a minor quibble. It's also unlikely to be changed before next month, given that this is the finished US code we have.

It's cool though that the modification options make sense to people that don't obsess over *Max Power* like demented idiots. For twisty road sections, pick the road tyres and the short gear ratios. It won't do it for you though, so take a few seconds to check.



## Essentials

**The developer:** Tantalus  
**What it's done:** *Monster Truck Madness* (GBA), *ATV Quad Power Racing* (GBA)  
**Multiplayer:** two cart link-up  
**Connectivity:** No dice  
**The publisher:** Kemco  
**Release:** November  
**Review:** Next issue. But we already know that it's good

## Predicted score

It's testament to the quality here that we finished the cups, even with *Mario Kart* in the office. It's certainly an arcadey game, but that's what you want on GBA. Save the sims for GameCube, like.

NOM UK Predicts **80%+**







# "Mario has no personality... and nor has Link."

We took a trip to Salt Lake City to visit the guys at Avalanche Studios and bring you the inside story on their work. Do you want their jobs?

## John Blackburn

President, Avalanche Studios



### Q: To get things started, how did you get into the business?

A: I was studying a Masters Degree in Banking Programming at the University of Utah. Then I saw an advertisement in the newspaper to make games for Nintendo and Sega, so I went for it and got the job. The first game I worked on was the Super NES conversion of the first *Mortal Kombat*. After that I was involved in a string of 16-bit titles, then went on to form Avalanche Studios in 1995. We mostly did ports for Midway.

### Q: Now you're the main man. So, what were your initial ideas and concepts for *Tak and The Power of Juju*?

A: We really wanted to make a game that was funny. *Conker's Bad Fur Day* wasn't around at that time and we felt there weren't any truly funny platformers out there. We thought Mario, although starring in great games, had no personality – he never does or says anything. We wanted to create a strong personality in

a character and make a character that was likable and funny. That was our initial aim. Then, we wanted to include magic. Not the sort that you see in *Dungeons & Dragons*, or the *Final Fantasy* games with fairies and all that stuff. We wanted witch doctors and voodoo magic.

### Q: Okay, so once you've decided all of that, what was the first thing you started in the actual development of *Tak and The Power of Juju*?

A: The concept of the lead character and the world he exists in. It's really tough when you're starting from scratch because when you're coming up with ideas for a game and you have the opportunity to do anything you want, you have to get everyone around the table to believe in the

same idea. This is always tough. Then you have to start on the conceptual art, then high-concept design and creating the framework of the game. Making a great story line was the key part of the framework for *Tak*.

### Q: You spoke about design for the characters. Have there been any major design changes to the game or any of the characters since early development?

A: *Tak* was changed a bit. He used to be a clichéd character to this sort of game – he had a bone in his hair and stuff like that. But we changed that and gave him a bowl-cut instead. He also used to be without lips, but it looked weird when he spoke so we added those, too. He's mostly kept his basic shape throughout, though.

### Q: Speaking of design, we believe level design is the key part of platform games. What were your main aims when creating the worlds for *Tak*?

A: We aimed to design very open levels – huge expansive worlds where all elements of the gameplay blend naturally into the environment. We didn't want players to be wandering around a thick, green forest, then suddenly find a catapult and wonder why there's a catapult in a forest. It just wouldn't be natural. We wanted to make everything within our levels make sense to the player.

### Q: Cool. None of us are programmers, so without getting too technical, could you tell us what was the toughest stage/obstacle in the development of *Tak*?

A: The water. Our aim was to



have water that warped around the character as he splashes around. Again, at the time we were working on this, there was nothing else around that did this. We were aiming to set a bench mark in this area, but *Super Mario Sunshine* and *Star Fox Adventures* beat us to it. However, they showed us what we wanted to achieve, but we ended up toning down the water effects to make it blend in with the rest of the world. With all the power of the latest games consoles, some developers over-emphasise flashy special effects to the point where it looks fake. One such example of this is in the latest run of *Madden* games. The helmets are so shiny, they don't blend in with the rest of the game's graphics. We didn't want our water to look so special that it stole all the attention from the rest of the worlds that we created, so we toned the effects down slightly.

Q: We know what you mean. Again, without being too





## Before and after

Check this out. Ever wondered what changes are made to a game from the early planning stages to the

final designs. Take a look at how some of the main characters used to look and how they look now...

BEFORE

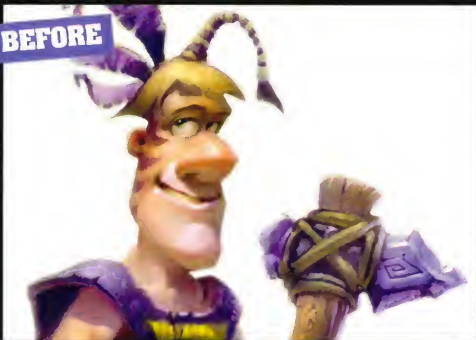


AFTER



← JIBOLBA →

BEFORE



AFTER



← LOK →

BEFORE



AFTER



← TLALOC →

**technical, were there any differences regarding the development of *Tak on GameCube and PS2*?**

**A:** Here goes... The advantage of the GameCube is the CPU (Central Processing Unit). It is much faster than the PS2's CPU, which enabled us to do more advanced physics within the worlds. We could also do better character rendering. The textures also look a bit crispy on GameCube because the hardware has built-in texture compression. The disadvantage with GameCube is its polygon fill-rate – this is the number of pixels the machine can draw on the screen per frame. The PS2 is better at this than GameCube. All this meant in terms of actual visual difference was that some of the transparent effects (smoke/mist) had to be toned down slightly for the GameCube version. Got that?

**Q:** Yeah, we got it... just about. Leaving technical issues alone now, with so many 3D platformers around nowadays, what would you say is the main thing that makes *Tak* different from all the others? What makes it special?

**A:** I feel like we've created a game that is genuinely funny and totally natural throughout. *Zelda* games always have great story lines, but Link has no personality. I seem to remember Shigeru Miyamoto once saying that Link was given that name because he serves as the player's link into the game world – you put your personality into him. It works well, but we didn't want our character to be empty. We believe that we've achieved a likable personality in Tak and the other characters in the game.

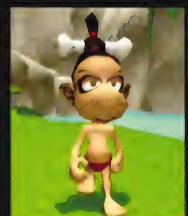
**Q:** We quite agree, John. So, as a games developer, are there any games on GameCube that you really admire, either for technical reasons or because of their superior gameplay?

**A:** *Super Mario Sunshine*, in all departments, but particularly the water. It's absolutely stunning! We were so amazed that we spent a while analysing the game to figure out exactly how they created such an effect. The gameplay is awesome, too – the feeling of control over Mario is near flawless. *Metroid Prime* is the other game that really amazes me for

sheer quality of gameplay. The graphics were great, too, but there wasn't anything in there that we felt we couldn't achieve as well. But *Metroid Prime* has the best gameplay of any game on GameCube, in my opinion.

## Tak 64

Did you know that *Tak and the Power of the Juju* was originally an idea for the PlayStation and N64? We've even got the shots to prove it, looking nowhere near as good as it does now. If you ask us, seeing it on GameCube with lush visuals and realistic physics was worth the wait all these years.







Neither boy nor ape would admit responsibility for the offending smell

# Apes and jungle japes

A 3D platformer with cheeky apes, angry chickens and a chicken suit with explosive eggs – embrace the JuJu.

**T**here are too many half-arsed platform games on the market. But it's already safe to say that this is not one of them. THQ's new platform adventure has a cast of characters that resemble something out of a Looney Toons cartoon, psychotic killer-chickens that chase you AND it let's you wear a cheeky chicken suit that drops explosive eggs. You know that's cool. ADMIT IT!

You play as Tak, the unsuspecting hero of the Pupununu tribe, who have all been turned into sheep by the evil JuJu powers of Tlaloc. A strong warrior called Lok was supposed to save the people from this terrible fate, but he's also been hit by the spell and become useful for nothing more than a nice Sunday roast. Now Tak has the job of gathering everything the village elder,

Jibolba, needs to change him back.

The most unique aspect of *Tak and the Power of JuJu* is the interaction with animals to solve puzzles. Finding keys to open doors, or killing all the enemies in the area to proceed is all tried and tested stuff, but what about battering a chicken onto a chicken-activated pressure pad to open a door. Or stealing eggs from a chicken base and frying them on hot-spots to advance to the next area. That's the angle *Tak* takes on puzzles and we really like it.

You can carry sheep on your head to disguise yourself. Orang-utans bend

## TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

down trees for you to stand on and catapult you through the air. There are rams that'll smash you if you go near them and you'll need to lure them out of your path with food. Pick up a chicken egg and a whole bunch of very angry hens will chase you, hell-bent on pecking your ankles off. And they're tough to get away from, too. Annoying sods.

We don't have enough space to write about all of the animals and their comical antics, but it's clever, not to mention being brilliantly animated, with a quirky, cartoon-like humour. When you're carrying a sheep, it looks around with a wide-eyed, confused expression as if it's trying to work out what's going on. If you attack an orang-utan it'll smash you back, point and laugh at you hysterically as your face scrapes along the floor.



Tak loves teeth, like some tiny, psychotic orthodontist

## Respect the chicken suit



You can't have a game that features chickens without a cool chicken suit, too. When Tak slips into this, he trots around like a king, popping out explosive eggs. He also hovers on updrafts and drops eggs like a bomber. Fear the chicken!





**“The gags will slay you, something games don’t manage too often.”**



Carnivorous plants – a platforming tradition



There’s cute, cartoon life all around the village



Even little Tak looks funny as he runs around, with his floppy limbs and pot-bellied frame.

Some of the cut-scenes are even funnier, from the very first intro sequence to the story-telling interludes throughout the game. The witty and sometimes crude humour will actually make you laugh, like when Lok gets Resurrections Revenge (in other words, diarrhoea) and can be heard taking a much-needed dump in the background. It’s hilarious – something games don’t manage too often. Some try, but fail to raise anything more than a snigger.



## Essentials

**The developer:** Avalanche Studios

**What it’s done:** A bunch of old *Rugrats* games that nobody cared about.

**Multiplayer:** Not in here

**Connectivity:** Nope

**The publisher:** THQ

**Release:** Late 2003

**Review:** Next issue. Maybe...

### Predicted score

*Tak* is a solid platformer. The puzzles are clever and some of the cut-scenes will have you in fits. If the puzzles remain fresh throughout the game, this could be a surprise hit come Xmas time.

NOM UK  
Predicts

**80%+**

perform, the faster you’ll go. It’s great fun.

■ **That sounds cool, but can they be played in a multiplayer mode, so you can compete against friends instead of against the computer?**

Sorry pal, ‘fraid not. It would have been cool, we agree, but *Tak* and the *Power of Juju* is a single-player game only. Let’s not be too greedy now though, a lot of work has gone into making a solid one-player adventure that’ll take you 15 or more hours to get through. And that’s if you’re good.

game are cool. It even has monkeys! Yes, the king of all animals. They don’t roll around in balls, but they throw stuff at other animals. Cheeky monkeys. They rule.

■ **...and the worst part?**

When I got pecked to death SEVEN TIMES by those freakin’ killer chickens. AARGH! There will be sections of this game that you’ll have to play over and over and over again. It can be a challenge – the kind of challenge that’ll have you punching yourself in the face and swearing like a street drinker.

■ **15 hours? How many worlds or environments are there in the game?**

There are around 20 unique areas to be explored, each with its own tough animal-related puzzles to crack. You have the freedom to dive in and out of several areas at any one time and you’ll need to do so as you gain more powers and *Tak* becomes a more powerful hero.

■ **So, what do you reckon is the best part of the game?**

I liked the chicken suit. Just the way it waddles around is funny, but in general, all of the animals in the

But thankfully it was all good and *Tak* and his comedic antics – as well as a 12oz, medium-rare sirloin steak – made it all worth it.

■ **Are there any cool mini-games or special scenarios in *Rico Harbour*?**

There are a few, actually. You’ll get to compete in a three-way arena shooting fight in one of the boss battles. There’s also a cool rhythm-action racing game, where you must hit the directional and action buttons in time with a quirky background tune. The better you



**Trust me, I’ve played it**

Thank God this game was a pleasure to play. Seriously, I did over 30 hours of travelling to stay in Salt Lake City for just ONE DAY’s play on this baby. If I was then treated to a worthless pile of turd on a GameCube disk, I’d have probably contemplated suicide.



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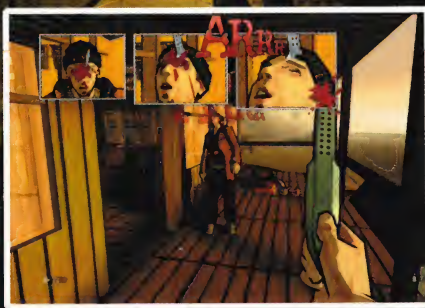
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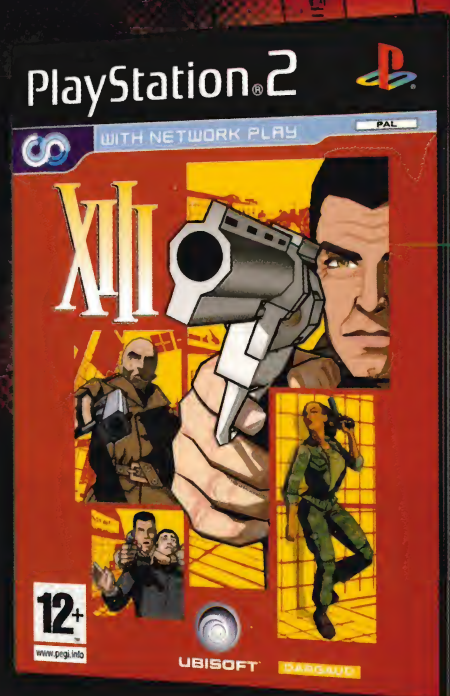
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# Mummy's the word

It's nearly finished. We've played it. It's good. Here's an in-depth look at this truly Egyptian platform adventure.

**T**ake a good dollop of *Star Fox Adventures*, spice with a hint of *Zelda* and then boil in an Egyptian broth, chock full of original and inventive ideas and you'll end up with *Sphinx*; an exotic mix of platform action, crazy puzzles and enough north African atmosphere to make the Pharaohs blush. The young demi god's come a long way since the demo we played a few months back and we got a chance to go inside developer Eurocom to take a closer look at the updated – and nearly completed – version.

This game is vast in every sense. Indeed the guys at Eurocom are keen to point out at the end of every sentence that *Sphinx* is 'very big'. As you stand atop a hill or mountain and pan the camera around with the C-stick you can see

## SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY

way off into the distance. It's suitably impressive and a good pointer as to how much time you'll be spending with this game.

The intro sequence is nice and short and you can get into the action straight away. Eurocom has decided not to include voices for the characters, just text. It's initially disappointing, but being able to quickly skip through without listening to an annoying voice-over, like the shopkeeper in *Star Fox Adventures*, is a bold and welcome move.

Your first mission is to retrieve the Sword of Osiris. It's a tutorial, but it still

feels like a part of the game. After you've leapt over lava pits, been spat from the mouth of a giant monster, shielded yourself from the hot stuff, used magma plumes to reach higher platforms and zip-lined your way to the sword, you feel pretty confident in your abilities. But that's just the start as Sphinx can learn new moves, like a double jump and collect neat weapons, shields and bombs as you get further into the game.

The cursed Mummy appears a little later in the game. He is, in fact, the young Tutankhamen, but through an evil plot devised by his brother he is captured and mummified. The only way he can become human again is by Sphinx



## Mummy goes through the change

Have a look at the crazy abilities of Sphinx's bandaged buddy.



### Flat Mummy

Allows Mummy to squeeze through tiny gaps in railings to reach secret or hidden places.



### Flaming Mummy

Used to set fire to doors, gaining access to new areas, and to unleash the Onyx Scarabs.



### Electric Mummy

Transfer juice from one power point to another, but don't get wet or the power fails.



### Bat Mummy

Get into hard-to-reach places by flying. You can push switches, even if they're way up high.



### Triple Mummy

One Mummy not enough? You can slice him in three and control each individually.





**"The intro is short and you can get into the action straight away."**



Run towards the huge green face. DO IT!



Put it away, mate. Sphinx ponders the advantages of wearing trousers

collecting the six Canopic vases. So while Sphinx runs around on the outside hunting out the vases, Mummy gets to delve deeper into Uruk Castle, the home of the evil Set. You can pass items between the two characters using Bas-Ket, a small Marvin the Martian-type character who can move between the two realms.

The controls are fluid and easy to pick up, perhaps because they're almost identical to *The Wind Waker* and *Star Fox Adventures*, but if it ain't broke don't fix it. The animation is incredibly lifelike and there's a nice amount of comedy in here, especially with the Mummy as he's unable to be killed – you can pretty much throw him around to your heart's content.

The imagination and humour spreads throughout the game with around 200 individual characters for you to interact with, including talking alligators and fluorescent orange Cyclops beasts with green hair. There are also a bunch of side-quests and mini-games for you to embark upon if you get bored with the main adventure and you'll be rewarded with upgrades if you're successful in these bonus tasks.

Sphinx feels very familiar, almost too familiar in parts, but there's enough new stuff in here to make it worth playing. The Mummy character is truly brilliant and the fact that he can't die adds a real sense of derring-do to your adventure inside Uruk Castle. It's not going to set the world on fire, but it'll definitely be worth a play.

## Essentials

**The developer:** Eurocom  
**What it's done:** *Buffy: Chaos Bleeds* (issue 134, 81%), *James Bond 007* in... *Nightfire* (issue 124, 81%), *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (issue 124, 76%)

**Multiplayer:** No  
**Connectivity:** No  
**The publisher:** THQ  
**Release:** TBC  
**Review:** Next issue

### Predicted score

Polished, stylish, fluid and fun, *Sphinx* has everything a top title needs – and Mummy is one of the funniest characters we've seen in an age.

NOM UK Predicts

**80%+**

right blend of comedy and puzzling action. The five different transformations he can go through open up a wealth of different solutions to the puzzles. It's a real joy.

**■ And the worst thing?** Did I mention that it felt like *Star Fox*? I did? Oh, yeah, like ten times, right? *Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy* has a lot of elements that are very similar to Rare's final GameCube adventure, especially in the Sphinx levels. Don't get me wrong, *SFA* was good fun, but we need a finished version of *Sphinx* to make sure that there's more to it.

you can use a Capture Beetle to take them back to the museum. Collect ten, 20 or 30 creatures for a reward.

**■ What sort of weapons do the characters have?**

The Mummy sections are devoid of combat, it's pure platform puzzling. Sphinx is a bit more toolled up. He initially finds a sword, but can also get hold of a shield, a blowpipe with four different types of darts, and some remote-control exploding beetles.

**■ What's the best thing in the game?** The Mummy. He's pure genius. Just the

**■ What can the characters swap between each other?**

Using the Bas-Ket character, Mummy can send the Jewels back to Sphinx and young Sphinx can pass the Canopic vases back into Uruk Castle. The Mummy can also collect Onyx Scarabs, a form of currency that Sphinx needs to buy special items.

**■ What are the side quests like?**

There's a museum in the city of Abydos, but it's a bit short on exhibits. As you battle against the enemies you can reduce their energy until they're weak. Then, rather than killing them,

**■ Are Sphinx and the Mummy mates?**

That's right. Sphinx and the Mummy are working towards a common goal. Sphinx has to collect the Canopic vases in order to give life back to the Mummy and the bandaged one is trapped inside Set's castle. He must find six crystals that have been stolen from the Abydos museum.

**■ Is there an even split in gameplay?**

No. According to Eurocom, the split is about 60/40 in favour of Sphinx. This seems like a shame as the Mummy's levels are brilliant, but Sphinx's areas are pretty good, too.



**Trust me, I've played it**

I really enjoyed the early demo and wasn't disappointed with this near-final version. It reminded me a lot of *Star Fox Adventures* which is no bad thing as I enjoyed that, too. But *Sphinx* seems to have a bit more up its sleeve than McCloud's last outing.



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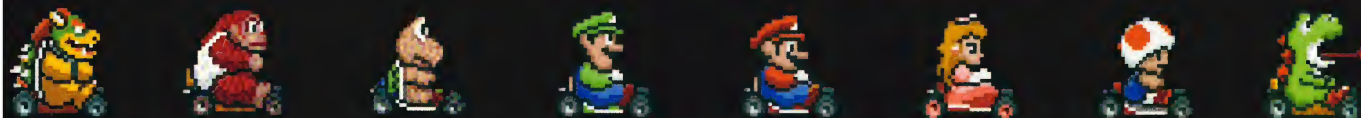
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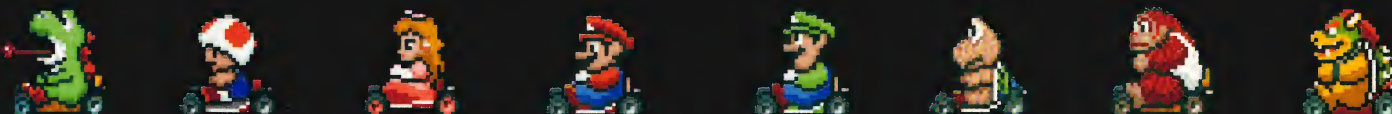
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# Tested

## T.H.U.G

p80

"We're sorry for ever doubting you, Mr Hawk."

### Scores and Awards

- 90+ .....Nintendo classic  
85-89 .....Exceptional in its class  
80-84 .....Great fun but not groundbreaking  
70-79 .....Some nice ideas but lacks Nintendo magic  
60-69 .....Few classic moments, for die-hards only  
50-59 .....Been there, seen it, played it. Yawn  
40-49 .....No ideas, no gameplay, no way  
30-39 .....Not worth buying  
0-29 .....Not worth stealing



**Turkey of the Month**  
The stinkiest of the stinking. An absolute minger that might give you some sort of bad disease just by touching it. Like *Universal Studios*.



**Game of the Month**  
We'll be dishing out this award each issue to the best-rated game, regardless of whether it's on GameCube or Game Boy Advance.

### MORE OFFICIAL UK REVIEWS!

- p84 *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*  
p88 *FIFA 2004*  
p92 *Pokémon Pinball Ruby and Sapphire*  
p94 *Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg*  
p98 *Worms 3D*  
p99 *Need for Speed: Underground*  
p100 *SSX 3*  
p102 *XIII*  
p104 *Onimusha Tactics*  
p104 *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*  
p105 *Beyblade: Super Tournament Battle*  
p108 *1080° Avalanche*

- p110 *The Simpsons Hit & Run*  
p112 *Metal Arms: Glitch in the System*  
p114 *Sim City 2000*  
p114 *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*  
p114 *Pop Idol*  
p115 *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*  
p115 *Gladius*  
p115 *Star Wars: Flight of the Falcon*  
p116 *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*  
p116 *The Hobbit*  
p116 *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004*  
p117 *FIFA 2004*  
p117 *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai*  
p117 *Quidditch World Cup*





**Tested** First. Official. Best.

# Tony Hawk's Underground

Is this a board too far?  
Or has Tony still got  
some crazy skate skills  
up his ageing sleeves?







■ ... or you could just beat up Tony and nick his shoes



■ Naked ladies or skating? Umm...



■ A design fault caused this model of taxi to catch fire when oiled



■ It's a long way from a vandalised half-pipe in Rotherham

## Game info

Price: £39.99

Publisher: Activision

Web: [www.thugonline.com](http://www.thugonline.com)

Players: 1-2

Memory: 13 blocks

Out  
Nov 21st

Sorry Tony, I didn't quite catch what you said. For a minute there it sounded like you wanted me to get off my skateboard. Then I thought you said something about climbing up on those buildings, shimmying along a telephone cable and driving a souped-up car around the block. Surely what you meant to say was that I should staple my feet to this trusty board and tear up the streets, right? Oh, I was right first time. Okay.

It's unbelievable to think that this is Hawk's fifth incarnation and yet the guys at Neversoft are still coming up with new ways to play. On the surface, *T.H.U.G.* seems like a simple

follow up to *Tony Hawk's 4*; the graphics are almost identical and still a little bit rough around the edges. The soundtrack, a cool mix of hip-hop, punk and rock has been slightly expanded. The moves on the board are reasonably similar, with a few new additions of course. It could be the same game.

That's until you're presented with the main menu and the Story mode option glimmers at the top of the screen like a beacon to all things new. You start the game in your New Jersey hovel. Penniless and hopeless, your board is held together with bits of duct tape and good will. Your friend, Eric, comes to the window and tells you that Chad Muska's coming to town to do a demo at the local skate park, so you grab your board, recap on some board basics and go to see a true master in action.

After Chad's blown everyone away he takes a ride around the

town, stopping occasionally to enjoy the scenery. If you can get in front of him and rack-up enough points you can impress him with your skills and get a brand-new board and some friendly advice.

The rest of the story sees you and Eric taking a trip across America – and beyond – in order to fulfil your goal of becoming skate pros. While it sounds like a gimmick, it's a great way to advance through the many stages. There are even a few plot twists that will anger and excite you along the way. We're not talking *The Sixth Sense* stuff here, just some run-of-the-mill double-crossing, but it's enough to hook you into the adventure and add a bit more weight to the story.

You'll be presented with some crazy challenges. Some involve getting big scores, others see you rescuing lost items or performing a range of tricks as some spectator shouts them out to you. Our current

favourite is making a fat security guard drop his chocolate bar into a swimming pool, which then gets mistaken for a floater, forcing the management to drain the pool so you can skate on.

The biggest departure though is the opportunity to jump in a number of vehicles, from a banged up family saloon to a gardener's cart, and razz round the streets, knocking stuff over. In all honesty, the driving bits are pretty bad. Most of the vehicles are a pain to control and incredibly tough to reverse, but they're pretty few and far between and the skating action's more than good enough to make up for them.

The best new feature is the ability to hop off the board and have a wander around. At first it seems unnecessary; you can see everything just fine from your board. But the walking feature gives you the opportunity to reach new ground. If you fancy getting on top of a hotel to Acid





## Tony does...

... a lot more than grind.

■ Tired of simply skating around and jumping over things, our intrepid hero of the half-pipe has found some new things to be getting on with. Check out his new moves below.



DRIVING!



CLIMBING!



HOME MOVIES!



JOGGING!



GARDENING?!

Drop into the pool, just hoist yourself up the side of the building and away you go. It's great just wandering around the streets looking for new Lines, Gaps and Transfers.

Although *T.H.U.G.* appears very similar to its predecessors, this new game feels a lot more realistic. A good example is the way that you upgrade your stats. Instead of collecting cash or finding tokens dotted around the levels you have to take a look in the menu and find out what skills you need to complete in order to boost your abilities. To increase your Grinding ability you need to pull off a timed Grind, if you want more speed then you have to rip out a big combo. This makes the game fun and challenging on many levels. Not only are you wandering around looking for challenges, you are also testing

your own abilities as a skater. On top of this is the chance to look out for all of the Gaps and Transfers that are hiding in the sprawling levels.

So you've got this far and still you're thinking "Tony Hawk's games are too hard. They lay down those challenges and if you're not good enough it's tough titty." Well, try these two words: difficulty settings. Ba-bosh! If you really can't get to grips with the massive amount of skill and ninja-quick reactions that have been required in previous games then this should make fantastic reading for you.

There are four settings to choose from. The lowest, 'Too Easy' has altered physics making it easier to get big air and longer Grinds – and harder to fall off your plank. But be warned, the hardest setting,

'Sick', requires an almost Zen-like devotion to the skateboard and only true veterans will succeed here.

*Tony Hawk's Underground* has the same graphics as *Tony Hawk 4*. It's got an equally impressive soundtrack. It's got loads of tricks and skills to master, and comedy challenges to attempt. Initially it feels identical. But it's not – amazingly it's better again.

We just don't know how Neversoft does it. For fans of the Hawk, this is a must-have title as always, but the introduction of those variable difficulty settings, along with the biggest levels and most insane challenges we've seen yet, make it well worth checking out if you've been put off in the past. We're sorry for ever doubting you, Mr Hawk, you've come up trumps again. **Dom**

**"The hardest setting, requires an almost Zen-like devotion to the skateboard."**



■ You'll get 10,000 points alone for wrapping your face around those concrete blocks



■ The staff refused to let us grind their counter (we did it anyway)



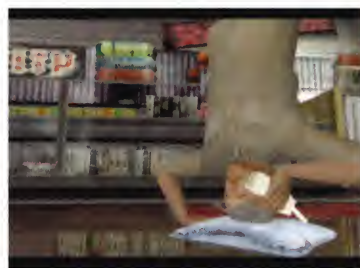




■ This guy's a bit like Yoda, but his clothes are much worse



■ 'Find the stuff from the student's purse'? Okay, where's the Old Holborn and Rizlas?



■ Stop arsing about, you fool



■ Now this is what it's all about – impressing the ladies below



## Back to the old skool

If you've been following the series from the beginning then you might appreciate this.

■ Each *Tony Hawk's* game has included new moves. You adapt and learn them and soon enough they're a regular part of your arsenal. And you don't realise how much until this Florida challenge comes along.

Here you must hit a Combo target score in four different locations. With one major catch; each new area uses the rules from each *Tony Hawk's* game. The first, using *Tony Hawk's 4* rules is easy, as are the next two. It's not until you come to the final challenge that you'll realise how



much you rely on the new skills.

This task expects a big combo score using the original rules, and that

includes NO MANUALS! Oh, and you've only got six seconds to think of something. GO!

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You wander around the streets thinking, "Ooh, that's a good object to Grind".

### No if...

You avoid Sk8er Bois as if they were some tropical disease and think Skittles are sweets.

### You'll love it if you like...

*Tony Hawk's 1, 2, 3 and 4* of course. That's kind of a no-brainer, right?

## GRAPHICS

7

There's loads going on in the background and tons of – fairly jagged – detail.

## SOUND

9

An amazing soundtrack and the little yelps of pain have been improved.

## GAMEPLAY

10

Yet more improvements. We're not sure how they do it – we're just glad they do.

## LIFE SPAN

1 MONTH

Eight hours to finish Story mode, but that just opens up a whole load of new stuff.

## VERDICT

► Truly inspired, with great humour, cleverly designed levels and challenges, and a new variable difficulty level, *T.H.U.G.* is here to rob you of your spare time. Frankly, we're not sure if this can be improved much more.



**BEST BIT:** The Craziest Footage in the World. You no letdown, but nowhere have to play it, believe us. **WORST BIT:** The driving's near as good as the rest.

## SECOND OPINION

► This isn't a driving game, or a platformer, so who cares if those sections are a little rough around the edges? The skating's pure gold and you won't want to miss it. **Mike**

## NOM UK'S RATING

91%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK





■ Legolas and a wraith fight it out over the Smokey Bacon crisps



■ It's always embarrassing when your Dad turns up and starts dancing

■ It was only the thought of getting his beard caught in the mechanism that worried the big G



# The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King

Style over substance? Surely not from EA, publisher of the finest money-spinning franchises and sequels on the planet!

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Web: [www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)  
Players: 1-2  
Memory: 6 blocks

Out Now

➤ **Film into game into film. A seamless transition between live action and video game. One minute you're watching a scene from the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, next the camera pans around behind the lead character's head, the image pixellates and you're into the action. It's almost perfect.**

Unlike the game, which is far from great. We like the way the *Return of the King* blends in with the movie. We love the fact that you can now choose your path by selecting to play as Gandalf, the Hobbits or the human/elf/dwarf triple-threat team. We also love the fact that this game looks and sounds stunning with crisp textures,

detailed characters and a real sense of Hollywood-epic film-making.

What we don't like is the fact that, despite drawing on all of the inspiration, atmosphere, heritage and mystery surrounding the *Greatest Fantasy Book Ever Written*™, EA has come up with a thumb-achingly repetitive button basher with little room for subtlety, adventure or even a chance to draw breath.

If you're a fan of *The Two Towers* then you'll be well catered for here. The game begins at the end of the second movie with Gandalf arriving at Helm's Deep with the Riders of Rohan, just in time to save Aragorn's chainmailed arse. As the white wizard charges down the hill on Shadowfax the live action transforms into the game, with you in control of Gandalf. After defeating a few Uruk-hai and learning the basic moves you help Legolas on the ramparts and then slide down a

rope to set off catapults and stop the orkish hordes breaching the castle walls. Stirring stuff indeed.

Just like the last game, your performance is rated according to how many enemies you killed and how well they were dispatched. This then translates into experience points, a currency that you can spend on upgrading your character, or the whole team, by buying new moves. As well as the end-of-level upgrade system, your character will level-up as you battle through the stages by simply cutting down more and more goblins and orcs in the most presentable way possible.

*Return of the King* is very movie-like in its presentation. The camera angles are many and varied and the viewpoint moves around quite a bit as you run through the levels. It's just about spot-on and you get a good view of the action from all angles, although you're occasionally you are ambushed

by onrushing enemies as they spring into shot. And the characters really look like their human counterparts, it's easy to believe that you are actually Legolas, Gandalf or Sam and for the first few hours it's terrific to see yourself as the hero of an epic adventure such as this.

But the gloss soon wears thin. You will die, time and time again trying to achieve your goals. What's more, the vital checkpoints are few and far between and you'll have to replay huge chunks of a level if you make a mistake.

The real problem is that for a game based solely on hacking and slashing, the actual fighting system is weak. Targeting weapons you can chuck is clumsy, the collision detection regularly leaves you trapped in a corner with little means of escape and the enemies have that annoying ability of being able to attack you from all angles with you seemingly unable to respond. **Dom**



## Spoiler alert!

There's still sometime to wait for the final movie so be warned.

■ Peter Jackson's *Return of the King* hits the big screen on December 17th; EA's *Return of the King* will be out by the time you read this. If you don't want to spoil the experience of the final epic encounter at Mt Doom then you'll probably want to wait until you've seen the movie before you buy this. There are loads of top-quality cut-scenes and interviews with the cast filled with images from the film. Don't say we didn't warn you.



■ Tubby, carrot-munching half-wit Sam Gamgee runs from a big bat. Loser...



■ They have SO nicked this out of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, believe us

**"It's terrific to see yourself as the hero of an epic adventure such as this."**



■ Defend the curry-throwing machine at all costs



■ "Respect your elders!" Gandalf wades in to stop the local kids larking about by the bus stop

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You love swearing at your TV, throwing your pad at the wall or button-bashing marathons.

### No if...

You were expecting an adventure that does justice to the intricacy of the books and films.

### You'll love it if you like...

*The Two Towers*. Aside from new characters and surroundings, little has changed.

## GRAPHICS

9

Beautiful. The transition from movie action to in-game battling is stunning.

## SOUND

8

Movie quotes and a stirring soundtrack, but the clashing of blades gets irritating.

## GAMEPLAY

5

Button bashing, button bashing and, er... more button bashing quickly gets dull.

## LIFE SPAN

15 HOURS

It's hard, really hard, and frustrating, but stick with it and you'll find a lot of game.

## VERDICT

> Scratch away the glossy veneer and you'll discover a game shallower than a puddle. Frustrating and clumsy, but addictive in a masochistic kind of way, this should be test driven before you splash the cash.



**BEST BIT:** The visual transition from film into game is sublime.



**WORST BIT:** Hack, hack, hack. That's all you do. No, seriously.

## SECOND OPINION

> It looks like Liv Tyler, but plays like Dot Cotton. We all know it should've been a hell of a lot better, but at least it makes your TV look nice for a bit. *Kingsley*

## NOM UK'S RATING

63%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



# THE ADVENTURE OF A



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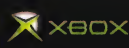
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■ Murray at full stretch, but this one's in the onion bag



■ Pick a man and put him in



■ Telfer falls for the hypnotist's red card zombie trick

# FIFA 2004

22 grown men playing with each other. In anyone else's eyes it'd be dodgy, but these fellas have one thing. A footy.

Forget all that rubbish about *ISS* being better than *FIFA*, we're bored of that already. The last decent *ISS* had bleedin' Paul Ince on the box and the Guvnor hasn't played for England in years. So, it's *FIFA* or... *FIFA*. Some choice, eh? It's tough for footy fans, but it's this or nothing, so you've got to live with Motty being way behind the action and babbling stuff like: "He's hit the woodwork!" when you actually blasted it well wide five minutes ago. Life's a bitch, ain't it?

But how about this: you can play as rubbish clubs. Leyton Orient, Carlisle, you know the score. Even the mighty Southend and those dirty

Gooners (come on! – Kingsley) can play each other, even if most of the Shrimpers run around like carthorses (just like real life then – Dean). Fair play on that, *FIFA*.

Then there's EA's new trick. Off The Ball control is the thing's name, but that doesn't mean you can lump the opposition when the ref's not looking. Instead you can out-fox them, spray passes, play the ball into space, perfect through-balls and so on. You only get three players to choose from though and one of them might not be the one you really want.

You'll just have to cycle through them and when you've got Roy Keane rushing your way you'll want to get rid of that

ball bloody quickly. Quite simply it doesn't work if you're in a defensive scrap, but if you've got time and space it's neat. Or you can just play football the normal way, 'cos that's better.

So, is it going to be a memorable *FIFA* victory? Can they pull one more trick out of the bag? Has this review got any more football clichés up its sleeve? Over to you, Big Ron.

One thing that might just save it is Career mode. Finally a proper management element has been added to *FIFA* and you've got five years to turn your team around, play out of your skin and win promotion. The better you do, the more points you'll get, which can be spent on training and players.

It's a watered-down *Championship Manager*, but there's nothing like that on 'Cube. Just a bit more depth would have made it a killer.

*FIFA* still plays a good game of footy and, as you'd expect, every team's included (even MLS and the Belgians get a sniff). All the usual stuff like kits and players are bang up to date, which you'd expect. Even Motty and Andy Gray actually seem bothered even if they sometimes lie and say the wrong things. Maybe they just get bored watching your match and pretend that other stuff is happening. Who knows? That's one of the great mysteries of *FIFA*. One that isn't, is that this latest version is pretty good. **Tim**

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Web: [www.fifa2004.ea.com](http://www.fifa2004.ea.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 34 blocks

Out Now



## Put a name on it!

EA claims the player likenesses are the closest yet. We're not sure why...

■ The mug shots in *FIFA* gave us some bother back in issue 132 and after playing the game we think some of the biggest stars won't be too pleased with their appearance.

Players like Van Nistelrooy and Ronaldo look good, but some of their mates aren't going to be too impressed. Solskjaer looks like he's gone mental with the talcum powder and, for such a well-known star, Harry Kewell looks really dodgy. Michael Owen's a bit iffy, too, but you knew that.



**"Forget all that rubbish about *ISS* being better than *FIFA*, we're bored of that."**



■ Things get ugly – especially around Baros' face



■ Team spirit – the boys pitch in and help Kluivert find his car keys



■ Sweet, sweet goals – and *FIFA* will show them in TV-style glory



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You want the UK's only decent 'Cube footy game, even if it's just been overhauled a bit.

### No if...

You haven't got a clue who Michael Owen is and you think Eriksson is a mobile phone.

### You'll love it if you like...

Non-Prem footy – they've finally realised there are more than 20 teams in England.

## GRAPHICS

8

At times you'll think you're watching *The Premiership*. Player animation is class.

## SOUND

7

Suitably atmospheric, but sometimes Motty's in another time zone. Catch up!

## GAMEPLAY

8

Off The Ball is just a pain in the arse. Play the normal way and you'll get on fine.

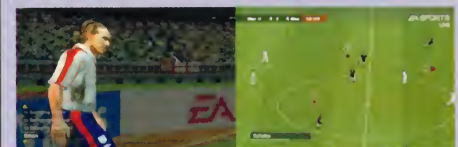
## LIFE SPAN

12 MONTHS

Career mode will keep you playing and you'll return for the two-man match-ups.

## VERDICT

> If you love *FIFA* you'll buy this anyway. Updates make it authentic and it still plays a good game, it just doesn't have the 'OH MY GOD THIS IS AWESOME!' factor. Come on Konami, where's *Winning Eleven*?



**BEST BIT:** Beck's hair. Well, for the next month or so anyway.

**WORST BIT:** Trying Off The Ball in a midfield battle. You'll get murdered.

## SECOND OPINION

> A spotter's badge for Tim, despite loving the Shrimpers. Early doors, it's great, but it's only got good looks in the locker and no lollipop in final third [shut up – Ed]. Kingsley

## NOM UK'S RATING

80%

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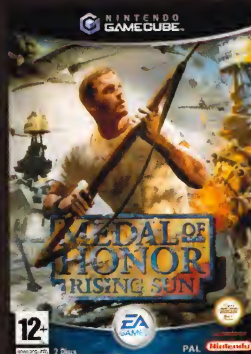


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# Pokémon Pinball Ruby and Sapphire

**Pokémon and pinball might sound like one cash-in too far, but with quality like this you won't mind.**

## Game info

Price: £29.99  
Publisher: Nintendo  
Web: [www.nintendo.co.uk](http://www.nintendo.co.uk)  
Players: 1

Out  
Now

**The hardest part of Pokémon Pinball is not viewing it through the eyes of a bitter cynic. This is because we stupidly thought Pokémon was all about exploration and battling – two qualities not normally associated with pinball. Which begs the question: why bother in the first place?**

Then you start playing and realise that this might well be an exercise in making money off the back of the franchise, but at the same time, it's a brilliant pinball game that actually uses the critters in a cool way.

It does this by framing the whole game around collecting and evolving Pokémon. Every

movement of the flippers is geared towards building a towering collection of beasts, totally ignoring the usual random score-building of pinball.

The action takes place over two tables, one representing *Ruby* and the other *Sapphire*. Collecting features revolves around firing the ball up the right loop at least two times and then placing it in the mouth of Wailer for the *Sapphire* table and Sharpedo on the *Ruby* field of play.

Then you have to hit the bumpers at the top of the tables three times to reveal the Pokémon beneath the Poké Ball. Hit the beast and it's yours. It sounds simple and it kind of is, but the challenge comes from being accurate time and time again, which in practice is easier said than done. But with excellent ball physics and tons of other stuff happening it never really gets frustrating.

There are 200 *Ruby* and *Sapphire* Pokémon to collect, which means a mountain of flipper work and the only downside is the random way that the Pokémon appear, meaning that if you're after a particular monster, you could, in theory, wait an eternity for it to appear in Catch 'Em All mode.

**"There are 200 Pokémon to catch – a mountain of flipper work."**



Another grumble is the decision to only have two tables, because no matter how well designed they may be, the fact remains that you'll be spending a lot of time with them – and familiarity may breed contempt for the less patient gamer. The ball physics are the best out there, but a lack of tables means it's not essential. **Rich Marsh**

## Playing it on the go

### Connectivity...

No chance, unless you count GB Player...

### Better Back Lit...

It's a carnival of colour – fine on a GBA.

### Multiplayer...

Hi-Score and Pokédex exchange is all.

### Save...

There's just one save slot. Boo!

### Extras...

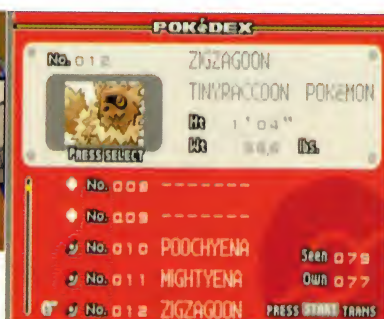
None that we could see – and we looked!

### Where we played it...

With the ability to save anywhere we found this a perfect accompaniment for times on the 'throne'.



■ Evolving Pokémon is just part of the fun and games

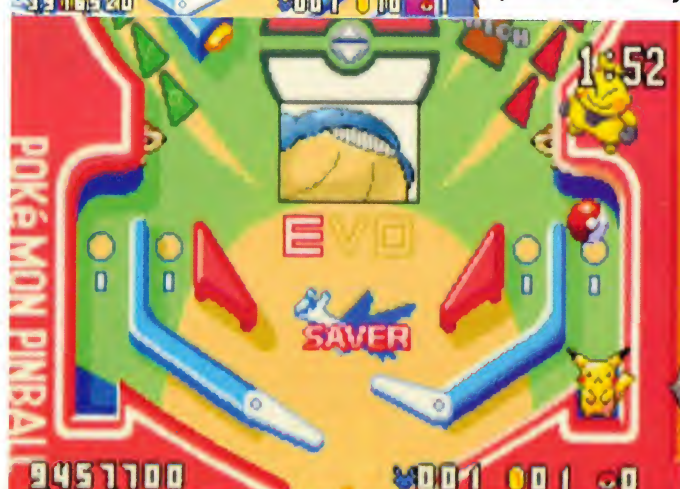


■ This message is what all true Pokémon fans want to see

■ If the ball drops down the side channels, all is not lost if Pikachu is positioned correctly



The Bumper area is where you need to get the ball during Catch 'Em All mode





## Look and see!

It's not just a carnival of ball thwacking; new locations, ball upgrades – it's almost too much!



Coins are awarded for hitting the ball through the Coin Loop. The amount you get increases every time you steer the ball through. Ball upgrades and an extended Ball Saver can be bought.



Whatever you've caught, you can evolve, but only once the ball has passed through the left loop at least three times, and when you've hit the ball into the Poké Mart.



Hitting the ball into the Poké Ball slot when it's active can bag you a world of ball upgrades that increase the score awarded for each move and a Pikachu to guard both side channels.



Travelling to the different destinations isn't easy as you've got to be very precise as to where you hit the ball. To do it, hit the Seedot switch three times and steer the ball through the left or right loop.



You only have three Ball Saves for each go, but it's a real life saver if you've mis-timed a shot.

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You're obsessed with all things *Pokémon* or addicted to world of bumpers and balls.

### No if...

You lack the patience to build up the Pokédex or if you're after more variety.

### You'll love it if you like...

*Pinball of the Dead* and this game's predecessor. This is pinball nirvana.

## GRAPHICS

8

The ball moves smoothly across the colourful and detailed tables.

## SOUND

8

The sound effects are perfect, as are the bright and breezy tunes.

## GAMEPLAY

9

This is how a handheld pinball game should play.

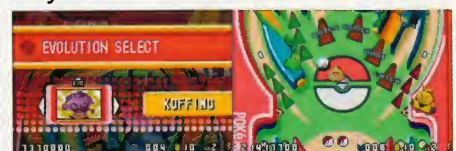
## LIFE SPAN

2 WEEKS

Catching all 200 Pokémon will take ages – it's an addictive experience.

## VERDICT

► *Pokémon Pinball: Ruby and Sapphire* works the combination of Pokémon collecting and finely tuned pinball action to near perfection. But you've got to wonder why there aren't more than two boards.



**BEST BIT:** You can catch every Pokémon from *Ruby and Sapphire*.

**WORST BIT:** Just two tables. We wanted more for our money.

## SECOND OPINION

► As pinball games go this is the best one yet on GBA. I loved catching the Pokémon but why aren't there more tables? There should be at least three more! *Dom*

## NOM UK'S RATING

83%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK





■ Battle to save the world on this giant waffle-maker



■ Disco Billy cuts loose... somebody save us!



■ Crush this defenceless herbivore with a massive egg and steal its life-force



# Billy Hatcher and The Giant Egg

Sonic Team continues its journey to the mental home. A boy in a chicken suit? You WHAT?!

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Sega  
Web: [www.sega.com](http://www.sega.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 5 blocks

Out  
Now

When you're about to eat a tasty boiled egg, do you ever stop and think to yourself: "What if there's a little baby chicken inside AND IT'S STILL ALIVE"? Do you then reason that to survive the cooking process this would need to be some sort of NINJA BABY CHICKEN? He could probably speak English with his tiny beak and he'd reward you for liberating him by letting you be his crime-fighting buddy.

Super Chicken and Dean foil diamond heist! Admit it, you've thought about it too.

Well, this isn't the game of that gloriously common superhero fantasy. This is about Billy; a boy young enough to dress in a chicken costume without worrying about how people will perceive his sexuality. He rolls eggs over nasty creatures, the eggs grow and eventually hatch. There is never a Super Ninja Chicken inside though – which was a crushing disappointment for us – just a collection of flying monkeys and weird little penguins.

The ultimate aim is to free some important (again non-ninja) chicken elders who are getting a hard time from some

dirty crows. Like any 3D platformer, each world has a number of objectives: save the elder; defeat the boss; get to an obstacle; hatch the appropriate egg creature to progress. It falls into a familiar pattern quite quickly, which is really annoying if you've been weaned on the sublime variety that a Mario platformer serves up.

It's not a Sonic the Hedgehog game, but his dirty blue paw prints are all over this. The bold primary colours are very *Sonic Adventure 2* and there are even rings in the sky that you ping through automatically, egg in hand. He appears as a hatchable creature and even elbows his way in via a GBA link-up game. Don't you just wish he'd sod off?

Those of you with massive SEGA 4EVA tattoos on your chest probably like all that, though. Throughout the game, Sonic Team constantly reminds you of its previous glories with familiar power-ups and faces. That'll be wasted on the majority of people who'll play this of course – they'll be into it because it's just damn good fun.

There's really not a lot to it besides rolling and chucking eggs, but then there's nothing much more to *Monkey Ball* than rolling a ball. Every boss you face is defeated similarly, by rolling your egg into them at the appropriate time and that's the serious weakness here. The whole concept of eggsmanship is a laugh, but it's not quite fun

## Billy's life

■ You might think life in a chicken suit rolling eggs is all glitz and glamour, but it can be a thankless

and lonely task crushing small, crow-derived creatures under a swollen female gamete...

What fills up Master Hatcher's busy days?



Oh my god! Sounds like a job for chicken suit boy!



Right. Locate golden egg. Golden egg, check. Egg on!



Squash those guys with the egg. Make it grow!



Kill more things with the egg! See how it is big?



Step away from egg. Squawk at egg to hatch it.





■ Evil critters hide in the grass...



■ ... like this handsome devil

■ Pick up the huge blue things. Why? Ask Yuji Naka!



enough to carry the whole game. In fact, growing the eggs into a hatchable size will soon become a mechanical chore.

It plays extremely fluidly, with the egg and camera control perfectly intuitive. The view can sometimes let you down when you're doing some precision rolling and jumping (has that bloody hedgehog been in here AGAIN?!), but for the most part it's a joy to play. It's fun, just not edge-of-your-seat, genius fun. It's the sort of game you can half play. It doesn't consume you or wrap you up in its excellence. If the phone rings, you'll happily hit pause and answer it. It's not like that in *Metroid Prime* where you CAN'T answer the phone because you're in the ZONE; a brief lapse back into reality to speak to Dave and that bounty hunter edge lapses, ready for the next huge tentacled thing to tear you up.

But one aspect where *Hatcher* really kicks arse is in its character design. Compare those laughably crap big-nosed plant-people on Isle Delfino with the twisted genius on show here. The evil creatures the crows morph themselves into manage to be both menacing and cute at the same time, big sharp teeth shining in their happy, twisted faces. That's quality.

We should also mention the multiplayer mode, because it's a cracking laugh. Or it was until the day *Mario Kart* arrived. The mass stampede of *NOM UK* staff into silly two-man karts suggests that competitive egg rolling and combat isn't among GameCube's finest social moments. It's free though, as are six GBA link-up games and you can't argue with that kind of value. **Dean**



Success! Elder chicken-dude liberated! Yippee!



Oh no! He's placed my reward token miles away!



Repeat egg-growing steps to allow access to token.

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You're a platform game addict, who craves some *Sonic* meets *Monkey Ball* action.

### No if...

You still look at every platformer expecting *Super Mario 64*. Which, actually, you should.

### You'll love it if you like...

Sonic Team. There's a strong undercurrent of 'Check us out!' that'll please Yuji Naka fans.

## GRAPHICS

8

Not the most detailed visuals, but fluid and with some top-notch beast design.

## SOUND

4

Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Make the bouncy tunes and chicken noises stop!

## GAMEPLAY

8

A hard one to score. It plays fine, but falls short of thrilling your ass off.

## LIFE SPAN

15 HOURS

You'll whizz through the first few worlds quickly, but multiplayer boosts this.

## VERDICT

> *Billy Hatcher* is a very likable game. It plays nicely and it's very original. It just doesn't grab you as it should. Fans of platformers will find lots to love, but it's not in the top bracket of GC titles.



**BEST BIT:** The originality – it's pure Naka from the start to finish.



**WORST BIT:** Grow egg, roll it around, grow egg some more... it can get repetitive.

## SECOND OPINION

> It's a good idea, but it doesn't grab me. I've got no empathy for Billy and his egg-based plight. I don't want to BE Billy. It's good, but not great. **Mike**

## NOM UK'S RATING

82%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



***In the night, every hour is rush hour.***

***Come over to the dark side. Rip through circuit, drag and drift races in any of 20 street beasts – Nissans, VWs, Toyotas, Mitsubishiis and other creatures of the night. Compete for cash and splash out on upgrades.***



PC CD-ROM

PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE





*Tear up the stats. Expect frightening performance. Drop dead looks. Choose turbos, suspensions, body kits and of course, nitrous. Enter the World of Need for Speed Underground. Because tonight you're not sleeping.*



Challenge Everything



# Worms 3D

It does exactly what it says on the tin.

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Sega  
Web: [www.worms3d.com](http://www.worms3d.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 10 blocks

Out  
Now

> You may not like crosswords, but you have to admit they're best kept in two dimensions. Imagine trying one in 3D – it'd be so difficult that nobody would bother. A guy once tried to make a 3D crossword, but it turned out rubbish. Then he was sacked from the crossword factory and his wife left him. Then his house burned down and his lucky hat got sucked into a jet engine.

We wouldn't wish that on the makers of *Worms 3D* – it wouldn't be fair. This isn't a terrible game (beyond the usual sloppy 3D gaming gripes) maybe it's just the wrong game. It's the easy option. It's the safe route. It's a bit boring.

Despite added strategy, more play modes and new effects like rain and snow,

it feels dated. Bouncing off the landscapes into the water/fire/whatever and getting stuck on the scenery while the timer ticks down will make you want to head-butt a nine-inch nail. The worms don't move well either (this should've been *Super Monkey War* – that would've been cool). Try firing through a small gap – you'll incinerate yourself because the collision detection is ropy. You can still blast the landscapes to pieces, but they only seem to come apart in convenient squares – that's weird. In the end, though, we all know this will live or die by its multiplayer mode and that's still good, clean sadistic fun.

We loved the original *Worms* and, although this would've been a cool idea in 1998, it feels a bit shallow now – the original has far more appeal, albeit for retro gamers. We'd have preferred to see an ultra-violent version of the original, cranked up to 11 and as crazy as *Viewtiful Joe's* mad uncle who went to Vietnam and lost both his legs. But you can still call your worm a funny name, so that's the main thing, isn't it? *Kingsley*



■ I'll have the worm-flesh, fried in napalm and covered in sand, please



■ The jetpack – easier to control than jumping, ninjaring or wiggling about



■ (Right) Worms can't feel pain – just anger, hate and lust for revenge



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You want a *Worms* game on 'Cube or like basic turn-based strategy games with a twist.

### No if...

You were expecting a true next-generation *Worms* – this isn't it. Maybe next time...

### You'll love it if you like...

Over-complicating simple things. Try eating baked beans with jam and you'll understand.

## GRAPHICS

6

Very pedestrian. We've all seen average rain and snow effects before.

## SOUND

6

It's Dolby, but there's no oomph. Some of the speech is funny... some of it.

## GAMEPLAY

7

Still best in multiplayer. The pleasure of poking your mate off a cliff is heaven.

## LIFE SPAN

3 MONTHS

The main game is dull, but the extras and multiplayer might keep you interested.

## VERDICT

> So, did a 3D twist make *Worms* better? Not really, it just made it more complicated when a far more radical overhaul would've been the best option. It's not bad, but it won't live in the memory like the original.



**BEST BIT:** The spiteful, vindictive mate-bashing is as good as ever.

**WORST BIT:** Those poxy 3D graphics are tough to get used to...

## SECOND OPINION

> Sorry, I just think this is garbage. This is a worse game now it's been popped out into 3D. It's too fussy to be fun now. The simplicity is lost. Waste. Of. Time. Dean

## NOM UK'S RATING

68%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ [WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK](http://WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK)



# Need for Speed: Underground

If Ferraris are just too fast, you could always try modding up your Dad's Focus.

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Web: [www.uk.ea.com](http://www.uk.ea.com)  
Players: 1-2  
Memory: 9 blocks

**Out**  
Nov 21st

Based around the really cool underground American street racing scene, *Need For Speed: Underground* puts you in control of loads of hot hatches and then spits you out onto the streets to race against other like-minded individuals.

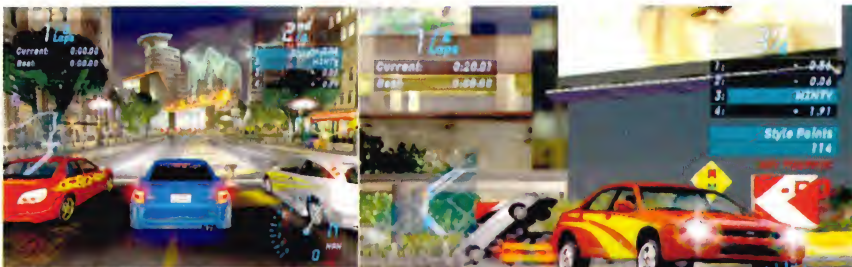
There's a story in here too, something about you wanting to be the coolest. Whatever. Original it certainly isn't, but scrape away those pretend girls and all the cray-zee dudes and you'll find a super-fast racing game that's damn good fun to play.

The main Underground mode starts with you selecting a car and taking part in a few races. Once you've earned some

cash and burnt some rubber you'll unlock new mods for your motor from engine upgrades to decals. The upgrade system is a little unbalanced as you unlock loads of cosmetic bonuses and not many things that make your car go faster. Items are unlocked at a slow rate as well and you'll sit with pots of cash in the bank and nothing to spend it on.

Like *Burnout 2*, the courses are based around city streets, with circuits, winner-stays-on and point-to-point challenges to test your skills. There's also a cool Drag Racing mode where the skill lies in changing gear at the right time so as to maximise acceleration.

The graphics are smart with glossy roads and bright city lights, but the soundtrack is a letdown. The most important factor – car handling – is sound and the action's easy to get into. With the lack of racing games on GameCube, car fans will be pleased with this title, but you should get hold of a copy of *Burnout 2* before you get this. **Dom**



■ Three... two... one... argh, handbrake! Can we start again?



■ Detailed analysis makes for top performance



■ That's a great piece of parking, that is

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You carry an issue of *Revs* everywhere you go and you've worn a hole in *Burnout 2*.

### No if...

You yearn for the golden age of racing and you'd rather drive real sports cars.

### You'll love it if you like...

*Burnout 2*. But *NFS:U* has the edge in terms of modifying and customising your motors.

## GRAPHICS

8

Shiny cars, greasy roads, half-naked girls – but they're not quite polished enough.

## SOUND

7

Great engine sounds and crash noises, but the soundtrack is a bit whiny and shouty.

## GAMEPLAY

8

Handling is great and it's really fast, but there should be some more track variety.

## LIFE SPAN

20 HOURS

Underground mode is long and three difficulty settings will keep you trying.

## VERDICT

> Fast and fun, just like racing games should be. The mod options are great, but it would've been nice to have something else to spend all of your money on. Plus it needed more variety in the track layout.



**BEST BIT:** It's really fast. Blink and you'll end up as a hood ornament.

**WORST BIT:** The tracks just aren't varied enough. They feel like loops.

## SECOND OPINION

> I like this for its sporty hot-hatches and bangin' hip-hop soundtrack. If you're into modding cars and all that sort of stuff – like me – this is worth a look. **Mike**

## NOM UK'S RATING

82%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ [WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK](http://WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK)





■ Clear sky, towering peaks, clean snow – sweet



■ Remember: don't ever eat yellow snow. And if you're boarding through it, try not to get any on your clothes



■ Follow the big arrow – that's what big arrows are for



# SSX 3

Take one snow-covered hill, one plastic bag and... what?! They use polycarbonate boards now? Wow!

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Web: [www.ea.uk.com](http://www.ea.uk.com)  
Players: 1-2  
Memory: 1 block

Out  
Now

➤ Reduce the force of Earth's gravitational pull by about 70%, get a bunch of genetically enhanced snowboarders with unbreakable bones and drop them on slopes that look like they were crafted by some alien race – that's SSX 3.

What makes this baby stand high over the average gameplay of its predecessor, *SSX Tricky*, is the new Conquer the Mountain option. We busted open this mode in last month's hands-on preview, but for anyone who missed it (why?!), the idea is that you're cast out onto a mountain with three peaks. Your task, as the mode's title suggests, is to conquer the mountain by winning all the events that are held on its slopes.

Events range from standard racing or freestyles, to BIG Challenges where you're given time-limited or stunt objectives. You have to prove yourself on one peak before moving onto the next, until you become the undisputed king of the piste. Piece of cake, right?

You'll earn money from the events you win and the flashy stunts that you pull off. Drop in to the Lodge and you can use your cash to buy stat points that boost your boarder's performance on the slopes. You can also buy some new clothes, boards or whatever merchandise you want to make your character look like a dude. Shame there's no JD Sports around.

The best thing about this mode is its sense of freedom. You take the cable car or helicopter to the top of the mountain, then you're dropped off and have to find the venues for the events using the signposts dotted around. This really gives you the feeling that you're up on a real mountain,

competing in real events instead of choosing your race on a menu and being placed on the grid.

Despite the exaggerated design of the courses, they too have been enhanced to make them seem more like real slopes. Other snowboarding games lose their mountain-side illusion because of narrow, restricting courses and a low level of natural features like trees and bushes. The slopes in *SSX 3* have trees everywhere you look, as well as bushes and rocks, and the courses are amazingly wide, with multiple routes for you to explore. And the snow comes in just about every texture you could imagine, each affecting your balance and speed in its own specific way.

Even more amazingly, as you race along, trees will fall down in front of you, icicles will drop from cave roofs, boulders will tumble down into your path and, best of all, you can get caught in an avalanche. This stuff isn't in all of the courses, but when you see it you'll wet your pants. It's

awesome. Put this together with some impressive weather effects and you've got some of the most luscious slopes you can imagine in any snowboarding game, ever.

Learn the courses well and you'll be able to pull off the most extreme stunts you can imagine, leaping from one grind-rail straight to another, zooming down secret paths and launching from all the biggest jumps. *SSX 3* takes the record for the most radical stunts. As you would expect, you can send your boarder spinning through the air, flicking his limbs about in a nutter-style to earn big points and speed boost energy. Max out your boost bar and you'll be able to perform Uber Tricks that are even more insane. You can even do these crazy stunts on the grind-rails.

Master this and you really will be the king of the mountain. Once you get good at this game and you've boosted up your boarder's stats to the max, it's a hugely different experience to the first time you play. **Mike**





■ Rack up Uber Tricks and impress bored office workers



**"You feel that you're on a real mountain, competing in real events."**



■ Don't write bad words in the snow or the Yetis will get you



■ Collect pieces of wood in your face for an extra Bark Bonus



■ Time is running out and we still haven't found the gents

## Challenge yourself

As if staying on your feet wasn't hard enough...

■ When out on a Free Ride, you will occasionally be set a Big Challenge. Sometimes they are as simple as passing through some checkpoints in a time limit, but others will ask you to jump through a series of raised rings, or even grind along certain parts of the scenery.



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You like the idea of 'boarding, but won't do it in fear of snapping all your bones.

### No if...

You prefer racing to the tune of a turbo-charged, four-wheeled speed machine.

### You'll love it if you like...

SSX Tricky or maybe Tony Hawk's games. This takes stunts and half-pipes to the extreme.

## GRAPHICS

8

We've said plenty about SSX 3's visuals, but you NEED to see it moving.

## SOUND

7

There's a cool radio station soundtrack, but the effects are nothing special.

## GAMEPLAY

8

Solid controls and insane stunts to pull off. An improvement over SSX Tricky.

## LIFE SPAN

20 HOURS

It'll take ages to unlock everything on Extreme mode, then there's loads more.

## VERDICT

► SSX 3 plays brilliantly and looks sweet. The course designs and stunts are more radical than ever, making this a sure-fire hit for snowboarding fans or anyone into high-speed thrills and spills.



**BEST BIT:** The feeling of freedom. Wide tracks and Big Challenges aren't smooth visuals are great. **WORST BIT:** Some of the Big Challenges aren't explained well enough.

## SECOND OPINION

► Better in every way and just how a sequel should be done. SSX 3 is much more fun to play than its predecessor, much easier to control and much more rewarding. **Dom**

## NOM UK'S RATING

86%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



# XIII

**What happened to I to XII we don't know. Maybe they were too rubbish to see the light of day. Thankfully this one made it out, 'cos it kicks ass.**

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Ubi Soft  
Web: [www.xiiithegame.com](http://www.xiiithegame.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 6 blocks

**Out**  
Nov 28th

**> The idea behind XIII is simple; make a game that looks and plays like a comic book. And it really does. If marks were awarded for sheer style then this game would be off the scale. Every cut-scene, pop-up and long-distance death is so beautiful you'll want to see it again and again.**

And the gameplay almost lives up to the gorgeous backdrop. You take on the role of number XIII, a secret agent accused of killing the president. You're wanted by everybody, nowhere is safe. The problem is that you're suffering from amnesia and have no idea who are your friends and who wants your head on a stick.

As you work your way through the game, the excellent cut-scenes and eerie flashback sequences will fill you in and make the whole thing easier to understand. As it's based on an already-established Belgian comic book there's plenty of good story stuff in here that's very intriguing. It's one of those games that you need to keep playing just to see what's going to happen next.

Part of the reason that this game is so playable is the smooth control system, a must in a First Person Shooter. If you've honed your skills on *TimeSplitters 2* then you'll feel right at home here as it's almost identical. Most of the time it works well, but finding a new weapon in the heat of battle is sometimes sluggish and frustrating.

The mission structure is also familiar with new objectives coming up on screen as each successive task is completed. It's not always immediately

obvious what you have to do but the levels are designed in such a way that you won't be wandering around for hours looking for something that isn't there.

The icing on the cake is the excellent soundtrack. It sounds like a cross between *Get Carter* and *Dirty Harry*, all wah-wah guitars and jarring chords. When things start getting hectic the soundtrack gets more fast and funky; when you're sneaking about like a ninja the music softens. It's incredibly atmospheric.

When we previewed this game we moaned about the aiming system and thankfully things have improved. It still doesn't have that *GoldenEye*-style twitch that we were hoping for, instead we're treated to a *Doom*-like system where aiming in the general

direction of an enemy lands a hit. As you progress your aiming skills will improve and you'll frequently come up with the head-shots that finish off enemies double quick.

At times *XIII* is frustrating; enemies don't always die when you expect them to, you fall off ladders, the goons spot you when you're just out of their sights, but these little glitches are few and far between. For the most part, this is a highly enjoyable and thoroughly playable FPS with one of the strongest story lines we've seen in a game. The presentation is second to none, graphics and sound combine to create an atmospheric and absorbing thriller. If the same attention to detail had been applied to the A.I. we'd be looking at a classic. As it is, *XIII* is just very, very good. **Dom**

**"It's a highly enjoyable and thoroughly playable FPS."**

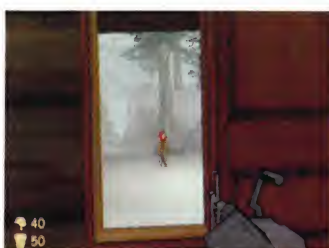


■ You want to be careful walking around in those high heels, mate – someone might see you... then shoot you



■ Ba-Bosh!  
Chair in  
your face!

■ Yeah, he  
sounds tough –  
but just out of  
shot is his  
Beanie Bear  
collection



■ This bad guy's invitation for a snowball fight is refused...



■ ... but he just keeps on asking. We said NO. GET OUT!







■ You're in the wrong game, love. *SSX 3*'s on p100



■ That's the exact same noise as when Tim drops his wallet



■ It's too late now – you should have said 'Nooo' BEFORE we fired



■ It's Christmas! Your present? A hot-lead necklace and earrings



■ That's a real pea-souper. Good luck shooting straight

## I got the oofing musket!

An FPS is worth nothing without a good multiplayer game. *XIII* delivers.

■ Of course you want to know about the multiplayer option that rounds off a FPS package. *XIII*'s four-player action is basic, but fun. The best part is the arena design. They're a bit cramped, meaning you'll be seeing a lot of your mates rather than running around vast open spaces looking for something to kill. There are also cool hiding places, if you're a camper, where you can get away from the carnage and plan your next move.



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You're a fan of the comics, or a lover of stealthy first-person shooters.

### No if...

You prefer something like *Quake* or *Doom*, this is less balls-out and more sneaky.

### You'll love it if you like...

*GoldenEye 007* or the Dam level on *TS2*. This is great secret agent, stealth-type stuff.

## GRAPHICS

9

Looks just like a comic and the cut-scenes are fab. Characters can be rough, though.

## SOUND

9

Great soundtrack, excellent voice acting and good sound effects.

## GAMEPLAY

8

Equally intriguing and exciting, but some of the little flaws will have you seething.

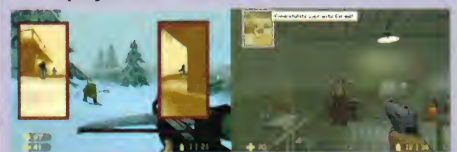
## LIFE SPAN

15 HOURS

That's just running through the main game, but the multiplayer will add life.

## VERDICT

> Almost great, but hampered by a few technical errors. It can't be faulted for presentation and story line – this is as close to *GoldenEye* as GameCube has got. The multiplayer is basic, but fun.



**BEST BIT:** The whole look and feel of the game. It's awesome.

**WORST BIT:** When a bullet to the head doesn't kill an enemy.

## SECOND OPINION

> It's always going to be compared to *GoldenEye* and that's a bit unfair. It's good, but not that good. Many bits are just too frustrating. Still worth a shot, though. *Dean*

## NOM UK'S RATING

89%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



# Onimusha Tactics

Think of this as the Diet Coke of handheld strategy games. Fizzy, but not fat enough.

## Game info

Price: £29.99  
Publisher: Capcom  
Web: [www.capcom.com](http://www.capcom.com)  
Players: 1

Out  
Dec

Two new GBA tactics games on one page! Are we spoiling you or what? But which one is for you? Well, that all depends on how tactical you want to get...

By far the lighter of the two games is *Onimusha Tactics*. It's based around the existing *Onimusha* universe, but replaces the fast-paced cut and thrust swordplay with a much more considered approach.

As with previous *Onimusha* games it's back to feudal Japan and the struggle

against evil warlord, Nobunaga and his agents of the underworld, the Gemna. Your character, Onimaru, is a swordsman and along with an ever-changing band of supporting characters the task is to fight battle after battle until victory is yours.

The battles are easy to get in to, with a minimal amount of fiddling accessed through a set of well laid out menus. It's just a case of picking your squad, moving them where you want them and attacking. You can equip new weapons and items, as well as learning flashy attacks.

This is great if you're new to tactics games and want an easy introduction that won't bruise your ego. But it's unlikely that anyone raised on the subtle nuances of *Advance Wars* will find this enough of a challenge in the long-term. **Rich Marsh**



# Final Fantasy Tactics

In-depth and utterly playable, can the FF franchise do no wrong? Er, apparently not.

## Game info

Price: £29.99  
Publisher: Nintendo  
Web: [www.nintendo.co.uk](http://www.nintendo.co.uk)  
Players: 1-2

Out  
Now

So, you finished *Advance Wars* and loved every minute? What next? Easy – this! *Final Fantasy Tactics* *Advance* may lack battleships and tanks, but it makes up for it with challenging and absorbing battles that almost reach *Advance Wars*' dizzy heights of chin-stoking genius.

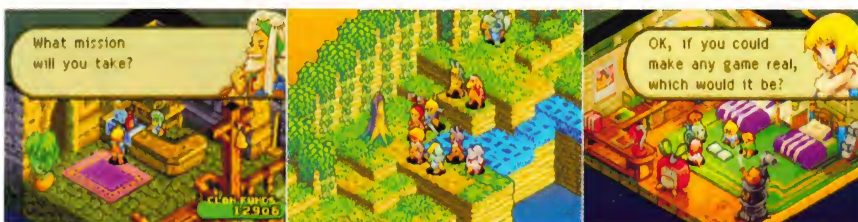
Bouts are varied and require you to master many different approaches. Before each, the rules of engagement are given – this can mean not being able to use swords or limiting the types of magic. Ignoring the

rules can result in the ref throwing you in the clink, with a heavy price to pay.

Great attention has to be paid to where you position characters, determining the strength and success of your moves. The game constantly stretches you, keeping you a safe distance from the comfort zone.

Another great feature is the way you can change your member's jobs to suit a mission. Decide you need more archers to deal with enemies and you can turn a couple of dudes into bow and arrow killers. And the cool thing is they won't lose all their hard-won abilities from their old jobs.

All this flexibility and depth comes at a price – menus that can leave players confused. But this is a small price to pay for a playable and well thought out game, especially when you factor in two-player co-op and competitive games. **Rich Marsh**



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

The in-depth strategy of *Advance Wars* (and its sequel) gives you cold sweats.

### No if...

You want to be really challenged every inch of the way – this isn't tough.

### You'll love it if you like...

Slow-paced games that reward your planning and patience, you nutter.

## VERDICT

> This is a forgiving introduction to the world of handheld strategy gaming that uses the *Onimusha* universe to great effect – despite the cartoony visuals. The problem is it lacks link-up options and the long-term appeal of games like *Advance Wars* or *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* (see below).

NOM UK'S RATING

74%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ [WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK](http://WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK)

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

The idea of really engaging the tactical side of your brain makes you smile.

### No if...

You're used to playing games that require reflexes, timing or speed of thought.

### You'll love it if you like...

Games like *Advance Wars*, or the idea of a game that'll take absolutely ages to finish.

## VERDICT

> If you can look past the fussy menus and occasionally muddy graphics you'll find a strategy game with all the playability, lastability and fun of *Advance Wars* and its sequel – and we reckon there can be no greater compliment than that. Go get this bad boy right now!

NOM UK'S RATING

89%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ [WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK](http://WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK)



# Beyblade: Super Tournament Battle

The game of the cool thing is too much like the cool thing to be a cool game.

## Game info

Price: £34.99  
Publisher: Atari  
Web: [www.atari.com](http://www.atari.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 7 blocks

Out  
Nov 28th

➤ You might not have one, but you've surely seen them. At play time, there's not a schoolyard that doesn't resonate with the rip and hum of spinning Beyblades. They look all cool and spiky, and they spin for ages. And you can fight them, although that's difficult without a curved arena to force them into banging together.

Popularity = video game. Always has. It's cool that this stays true to the spirit of the activity instead of spinning the characters off into some lame kart game or platformer, but that's also its downfall. You press **A** to rip the 'blade at full power. It drops

into the arena and spins. No amount of flashy effects can disguise that this is something kids already do. So, what does it add exactly?

Well, your common Beyblade doesn't have a mechanised dragon inside that flies out in a storm of special effects to smash your opponents. Man, they'd be well worth eight quid if they did. You can have a four-player 'blade off as well, but it plays out really strangely in practice. The play is fractured as you all jostle for position and call on time-consuming special moves. It's more like the TV show than it could ever be in the schoolyard, but it needs something *Pokémon*-like going on in the background to hold it all together.

Would you rather be pretending to rip Beyblades than actually doing it? It's not like footy. You can't very well be crap at Beyblade in real life. Unless you have two broken arms, but that's a whole other tragic story. **Dean**



■ We don't know which one to pick. They both look kind of stupid...



■ Please help me!! I can't stop myself from shouting!!!



Special attack!



■ They used to give things like this away in cereal packets. Now they're cool again!

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You'd buy a dead cow crawling with maggots if it had a Beyblade logo on the side.

### No if...

You don't know what Beyblades are and when shown say "Ah! A spinning top!"

### You'll love it if you like...

The idea of a four-player Beyblade battle with no actual Beyblades involved.

## GRAPHICS

6

Sharp enough, but a few spinning Beyblades isn't all that thrilling really.

## SOUND

6

3-2-1! Let it rip! It speaks like the TV show and also clanks from time to time.

## GAMEPLAY

5

It's basically knocking your spinning disc into the others. It does get boring.

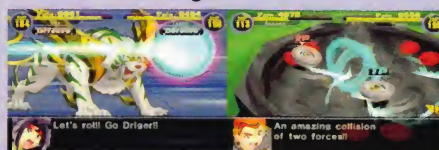
## LIFE SPAN

8 HOURS

If committed, you'll have a blast building up a character and winning leagues.

## VERDICT

➤ It's very faithful to the *Beyblade* universe, but limited by the source material. You yank a cord and spin Beyblades in a little basin until someone wins. You really do need to be a fan – and a big, mental one.



**BEST BIT:** The cool effects when you call on a special attack.

**WORST BIT:** It's actually quite difficult to win any of the matches.

## SECOND OPINION

➤ I like the idea of having 'blade fights just like in the cartoon and the feel is quite genuine, but there's nothing to make this amusing for more than five minutes. **Mike**

## NOM UK'S RATING

54%

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1/3rd



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1/3rd

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■ Jump the steps or crack your knees. Choose NOW!



# 1080° Avalanche

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Nintendo  
Web: [www.nintendo-europe.com](http://www.nintendo-europe.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 3 blocks

Out

Nov 28th

If you're looking for a sim, stop reading over now. *Avalanche* is for extreme boarding nuts with a craving for speed and a passion for danger. Break a leg.

1080° *Snowboarding on the N64* was an amazing game. The gameplay was outstanding – you felt like you were actually weaving a snowboard through real snow, as it cut into the powdery stuff with a convincing scraping sound.

Before we go any further we have to say that, gameplay wise, 1080° *Avalanche* is nothing like its predecessor. Forget realism because this is nowhere near it and it doesn't even try to be. *Avalanche* is an all-out action-arcade style game.

From the word go, you will be stunned by the blistering pace that the game races along at. Snowboarding games tend to lack in the speed department, but *Avalanche* just rockets on. Neat little touches such as your boarder's clothes flapping in the wind and subtle screen blur really

emphasise the feeling of speed.

Weaving in and out of all the rocks and trees at these speeds is challenge enough, but wait until you get caught in an avalanche. The snow slides in *SSX 3* are cool, but compared to this, they're like a small snowball thrown at your head by your little brother. And if you don't get a move on, the screen will quickly fill with white powder, and your boarder will get smashed to the ground and flattened like a pancake. Race most definitely over.

It's not just the snow that's a hazard. You'll have to look out for tumbling rocks and icicles, as well as blizzards and fog that make it impossible to see what's up ahead. You'll also come across bridges that collapse as you try to cross them, you'll smash through the inside of a restaurant, grind down stairway handrails and

sheets of ice that explode in your wake. Trying to battle your way through all this and win a race is a nail-biting experience.

When you're not racing, you'll be out on the half-pipe, Air-Make ramp, or the special stunt course known as Terrain Park, spinning 1080°s and pulling flashy grabs. But compared to *SSX 3*, *Avalanche*'s stunts aren't anywhere near as extreme.

In *SSX 3*, each time you jump you sail through the air, spinning and making your boarder flick his limbs around like an angry ninja. In *Avalanche*, the average course ramp won't allow you to do much more than a few quick grabs and a flip if you're good, before you hit the floor. Although if you pull enough spins on the Air-Make ramp, the game will slow down giving you more time to link together some extra grabs.

Your stunt and racing performance is affected not only by the boarder you choose, but also by the board they're using. You'll start off with a single board, but if you want to unlock more, you'll have to search for Coins in the Time Trial mode.

This gives you plenty to do, as each of the Coins are fragmented, and the pieces are placed in some hidden and awkward locations. All these gameplay modes, along with the four-player racing option and LAN features, means *Avalanche* will definitely not be a short-lived experience.

Don't look to *Avalanche* if you're hoping for a realistic blast on the slopes, because what you'll get is a fast-paced arcade game, made to be fun, rather than realistic. *Mike*





# Avalanche extravaganza

A situation you wouldn't want in real life.

■ For true men – and brave women – nothing beats the rush of leaping from a helicopter and barrelling down an icy hill. Especially with an avalanche in tow.



**"Look out for tumbling rocks and icicles, as well as blizzards and fog."**



■ When you're bored of razzing down huge mountains you can humour yourself in the half-pipe

■ More Roastbeef already? We just don't understand...

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You're looking for the snowboarding game with the ultimate adrenaline rush.

### No if...

You want a sim like *1080° Snowboarding* on N64. This plays nothing like that classic.

### You'll love it if you like...

Calling your mates 'dude', wrapping up warm and destroying public property.

### GRAPHICS

9

Super realistic snow effects, and even wildlife and public skiers on the courses.

### SOUND

8

The rumble of an avalanche is cool, but that soundtrack will grate your brain.

### GAMEPLAY

8

An arcade feel, easy to master. Recovery from bad crashes is often awkward.

### LIFE SPAN

2 MONTHS

Match Race, Gate Challenge, Trick Attack, Time Trial Coins... 'Nuff said.

### VERDICT

> *1080° Avalanche* has got to be the fastest snowboarding game we've seen and the avalanches are amazing. It's not in the same league as *Metroid* or *Zelda*, but it's still great fun, especially with four players.



**BEST BIT:** Just look at the 'Avalanche Extravaganza' box up there.

**WORST BIT:** No recovery button. One mistake can end your race.

### SECOND OPINION

> I was really surprised at how arcadey this is. It's nothing like the N64 game and more like a coin-op. It's still cool though, especially the avalanche stuff. *Dean*

### NOM UK'S RATING

88%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK





# The Simpsons Hit & Run

**Extreme violence, senseless destruction and big ol' rib-shaking belly laughs – this is everything a *Simpsons* game should be.**

➤ It seems we're slipping into some kind of deranged alternate reality here. All the natural laws of the universe are crumbling about us. You only need to look at the number of recent bizarre crossovers, like be-afro'd boy band idiot Justin Timberlake guest starring on Hip-Hop records or the sin against nature that is a baked bean pizza. But the final proof of our slippage into a scary, mind-twisting alien dimension must be the recent trend of botched *Simpsons* cross-over video games.

Most notable of these splicings, for all the wrong reasons, was the tragic marriage between *The Simpsons* and Sega's *Crazy Taxi* in *The Simpsons Road Rage*. It was catastrophically, diabolically awful. And now, with *Hit & Run*, we're faced with the prospect of *The Simpsons* crossed with the free-roaming hell-for-leather gameplay of Rockstar's *Grand Theft Auto* games.

But before those alarm bells start dingling in your head like Grandpa Simpson's tinnitus, you should know that this latest crossover is an *excellent* combination – a bit like if Jordan and Jodi

Marsh set aside their differences and hosed each other down for your viewing pleasure.

It's also very weird and further proof that someone has turned the world's insanity dial way up to 11. It begins with a morning much like any other in Springfield: Homer's panic to get Lisa's science project to school, then a mad dash to the power plant to get to work on time and it soon descends into a schizophrenic nightmare with Bart investigating mysterious flying cameras and strange black vans, and Lisa fighting off alien invaders. Marge and Apu also get in on the action, with huge areas of town dedicated to each of the game's five stars.

Within each area there is a bunch of missions that advance the story, split fairly evenly between on-foot objectives, platforming and speeding through the streets. There's also plenty more besides, like mini-challenges that include car races and treasure hunts, as well as destructible scenery that sets off one of the game's many gags that increase your overall rating. There are coins to collect to trade for new outfits and vehicle upgrades, and even collectible *Simpsons* cards that unlock an

## Game info

Price: £39.99  
Publisher: Vivendi Universal  
Web: [www.thesimpsons-hitandrunk.com](http://www.thesimpsons-hitandrunk.com)  
Players: 1-4  
Memory: 4 blocks

**Out  
Now**

exclusive Itchy & Scratchy episode to watch – but only if you snaffle all 100. Throw in unlockable multiplayer games and it's a cracking package to be sure.

You get a lot of game for your money and most of it's great. Sure, there's the occasional dull mission and the platforming sections can be pretty frustrating, especially as the control system could have used a bit more work. Regardless, the sheer weight of *Simpsons* authenticity and the fact that this really feels like you're in control of the show, will help all but the pickiest player see past its flaws.

With the *GTA* clone *True Crime* getting closer every day, *Hit & Run* might not be the best free-roaming action game on GameCube for long. Nor do either the driving or on-foot sections stand out as exceptional by themselves. But mix the whole thing up – gags, violence, an ace story line and all the rest – and you'll find a cracking game that's essential for any *Simpsons* fan (and that means everyone). Go get it now! **Lee Skittrell**

**“The sheer weight of *Simpsons* authenticity will help all but the pickiest to overlook its flaws.”**



■ Bart in his Mafia gear – that suit cost quite a few doubloons



■ Smithers crushes a drone from Sector 4



■ This revealing poster caused many a pile-up



■ Policewoman Marge knows no fear





■ Fat Hat Homer dances for joy. Next stop, the Kwik-E-Mart's, nuts-n-gum aisle



■ Mayor Quimby's ten-gallon hat tax was poorly received



■ All the classiest Springfield joints are here



## They can't do that!

What the population of Springfield get up to off camera.

■ The relatively open-endedness of the gameplay structure and the fact the game is a spin-off of the 'anything-goes' Treehouse Of Terror *Simpsons* Halloween specials, means you can get up to all sorts of mischief, unpunished! Kick Marge around the yard, mow down your least favourite Springfield residents and vandalise public property just for kicks. It's just like a night out in your own town centre, only with no Community Support Idiots to spoil the fun.



## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You want a game that can match your favourite show for frantic fun.

### No if...

You're expecting an RPG. This is arcade all the way, despite the freedom to roam.

### You'll love it if you like...

*The Simpsons*, *Futurama* and, of course, the game's main inspiration, *Grand Theft Auto*.

### GRAPHICS

7

Not great, but this is a cartoon land after all, so it's just about forgivable.

### SOUND

9

Samples from the show and a fantastic soundtrack will tickle your ears.

### GAMEPLAY

7

Not especially taxing, but the missions are varied, if a bit simple.

### LIFE SPAN

30 HOURS

Loads of secrets, plus a lengthy main game mean you'll be at it for ages.

### VERDICT

> A great game that succeeds in being both genuinely funny and a real blast to play, even if it isn't the most polished product you'll see on GameCube. It's also pretty simple to play, but no less fun for that.



**BEST BIT:** The minute attention to detail – *Simpsons* fans will swoon.

**WORST BIT:** The missions are occasionally dull with hit-and-miss controls.

### SECOND OPINION

> All *Simpsons* games are rubbish, right? Wrong. Yeah, the others stink like Maggie's used diapers, but this one rocks like Otto's school bus. Eeeexcellent... *Kingsley*

### NOM UK'S RATING

81%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK





■ Aim for its strangely thin, vulnerable knees

■ An inch lower and it's robot brains on the floor time



■ Bzz-Zack! This is why we got into gaming – stupidly large guns

## Metal Arms: Glitch in the System

Attention robosexuals: it's time to engage in some tough love. Ouch!

### Game info

Price: £39.99

Publisher: Vivendi Universal

Web: [www.metalarms.com](http://www.metalarms.com)

Players: 1-4

Memory: 4 blocks

Out Now

➤ **First rule of robot combat games: the robots you shoot at should be much easier to blow up than you are. You have to be harder. Sod fairness, this isn't a one-on-one fight. It's you versus a whole army of them. It's only courteous for waves of them to burst into flame as you sweep back and forth with the laser...**

But not in this game. Nope, it seems like every other dirty metal critter in *Metal Arms* has the same sort of power bar that you do. You brainlessly engage a room full of hostiles and you'll end up as a smouldering pile of bolts and scrap metal. That makes it hard. Probably too hard. That's the 'but' in a game we're otherwise pretty damn impressed with.

You're Glitch, a mining robot thrust into a war he's not built for. The plot is basically a load of

guff anyway and it boils down to good robots versus bad robots. Kill, kill, kill. That should mean cutting loose and blazing laser everywhere, but that's how you die quickly. The game implores you to try though, giving you big, rock-busting mining lasers and a cannon that shoots off spinning blades, dismembering on contact.

The key is your basic hit-and-run strategy. When a lift drops down with ten enemy robots on it, it's a good idea to run. You can't really hide and pick them off, so you have to formulate a strategy. Chuck a grenade into a pack of them, retreat. Pick the first few off that attack, retreat some more. It can be a laborious process and you almost dread it when you come across a large pack of enemies. The hardness takes away some of the fun and that's not right. You're clearly expected to die a lot and you don't have 'lives' – you just get whisked back to the last checkpoint.

Luckily, it's not always you that's doing the dying. One of the game's coolest features is an ability to hack into and

control enemy robots by remote. Glitch waggles a little joystick and then you become them. Straight away, you've got to start doing enemy robot things. Start running around recklessly and they'll terminate you like you've malfunctioned. Have a go at killing your colleagues too if you like, but make sure you've used your security clearance first to open that crucial door and let Glitch and his miner chums in. When your metal marionette is slain, you go back to being Glitch.

Glitch also robs cars, so we can probably reclassify him from 'Origin: Unknown' to 'Origin: Prison'. But these are flying space cars that don't require hot-wiring, which is a bonus when you're in a hurry. They're a bit unwieldy to fly, but they do have large grabbing claws on the front. That seems a reasonable pay-off to us.

Actually, the controls aren't exactly as they should be. The aiming is twitchy and fine movements are tough to pull off. Your viewpoint also goes walkabout if you reverse Glitch into a wall, so don't do that.

We'll mention the multiplayer mode briefly, because it doesn't deliver anything out of the ordinary. Four humans can engage in robo combat, but your options are just variations on standard deathmatches and capture the object type stuff. What makes it fun though is the way the game... is. In the main game, slain 'bots smash apart into their component parts. The weapons are extremely meaty and the non-tactical melee gameplay is a cracking laugh. You can't throw bots in like *Perfect Dark* and the levels aren't as classy as *GoldenEye*, but as a tack-on to the main game it's decent. **Dean**

**"The plot basically boils down to good robots versus bad robots. Kill, kill, kill."**



## Master of puppets

Make those foolish other robots do your bidding.

■ Waggle stick, press buttons and look! The robot's moving! It's a game, within a game! It's also quite like bits in *The Wind Waker* where you use a statue, but *Glitch* doesn't do that cool mystical swaying like Link.



■ There's loads going on here already – maybe they're too busy to kill you



■ Huge spikey robots are the least friendly, it seems

■ Multiplayer, split-screen malarky – nothing new



■ What's that?! Are you TRYING to miss me?

## So, should you buy it?



### Yes if...

You finished *Ikaruga* on hard first time out and couldn't believe how easy it was.

### No if...

Your tactics involve running forward with all guns blazing. That's how you die, son.

### You'll love it if you like...

Metal Mickey. The lead character looks like him. He was big in the 80s. Hello? Bueller?

## GRAPHICS

8

Lavish designs, cracking animation, but the frame-rate could be a lot better.

## SOUND

7

Crunch, clank, zap, bzzt, ching, chang, clunk. You get the idea.

## GAMEPLAY

7

Crunchy robot violence, but it's tougher than it needs to be.

## LIFE SPAN

1 MONTH

It's rock hard, there are lots of secrets and a fun multiplayer.

## VERDICT

► *Metal Arms* is very cool. It's less an action adventure and more an FPS in disguise, but if you're up for a challenge you'll be into it. Had it starred rodents instead of robots, we'd have liked it less. Robots rule, see?



**BEST BIT:** The weapons are special. See the flame-again. Ha ha. What good thrower? See how it burns? fun that isn't.

## SECOND OPINION

► How hard is this?! You think you're going to be wading in robo guts, but they waste you. Constantly. But it reminds me of *Jet Force Gemini*, which is no bad thing. **Mike**

## NOM UK'S RATING

83%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



# Smaller reviews. For

## Sim City 2000

Publisher: Zoo Digital  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Cart save**



■ You're in charge, you own the city and you can do as you please. Except that you can't. If you make a rubbish city, one nobody wants to live in, then all your people will move away and you'll reap no taxes. There's no end to the game either.

You decide which direction you're taking the people. Build more schools, hospitals, industrial or commercial zones, maintain the roads, balance the books, issue bonds, impose taxes on gambling and shopping. It's all so frightfully real to the point of being utterly dull for anyone except the most die-hard of Tony Blair wannabees.

What makes this worse is the sloppy interface. It's slow and cumbersome and there's no tutorial mode, meaning you're plunged in at the deep end of city planning with no idea of what to do.

On the plus side, once you get good, you can jump into Scenario mode and save an already-sprawling city from alien invasion, riots or a nuclear meltdown.

*Sim City 2000* works on a PC and there's no real reason why it shouldn't work just as well on a GBA. But there's something missing from this conversion: a complete lack of any finesse, making it difficult for newcomers and pointless for veterans.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

# 52%

## Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Publisher: Ubi Soft  
Release date: **Nov 21st**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Password**



■ It's been, what, three long years since Ang Lee's wire-fu extravaganza hit the big screen? So this seems like as good a time as any to release the obligatory game of the film, doesn't it? What's more, you wouldn't want to do real justice to an Oscar-winning epic like this, would you? So why not just churn out a generic platformer? Oh, you have. That's great, thanks.

Following the plot of the movie, but removing any of its subtle nuances, you play the game as Jen, a skilled warrior under the training of Master Jade Fox. You steal the Green Destiny Sword from Li Mu Bai and do a runner with the sword's protectors in hot pursuit.

As you batter the many weird and wonderful enemies you'll gain Chi, a powerful substance that allows you to unleash a super attack on your enemies. You must also look out for Green Dragon statues; collect ten and you'll be rewarded with an extra life.

*Crouching Tiger* is about as generic as a platform game can get and no amount of oriental mystery and affiliation with a classic movie can help. The action is cheapened by a hard-to-learn wall-jump move that's equal parts essential and exasperating. We can't wait for the next Oscar-winner-to-game title. How about an *American Beauty* shoot-'em-up?



NOM UK'S  
RATING

# 69%

## Pop Idol

Publisher: Codemasters  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Password**



■ Congratulations Dean, you get to write the review that doesn't need to be written. The sad fact is that the *Pop Idol* game box could be filled with scorpions and anthrax spores, but the logo alone will see it sell by the bucket load. Presumably our readers are too cool to even consider it, but what if an old person gets it for you as a surprise? WHAT THEN?

You might play it once and you'll be pleasantly surprised. Of course it's a rhythm-action game, but quite a clever one. You hit buttons highlighted as a cursor swoops around a circle and every missed button press sees your vocalist sing a bum note. Yes, the little guys sing on your GBA. Let Me Entertain You, Oops I Did It Again – proper famous pop songs. Two problems though: the digital Cowell praises you even if you sucked ass and it's REALLY easy. Like, finish-it-first-go easy.



IT WAS ALL MEANT TO BE

NOM UK'S  
RATING

# 68%



# your eyes to savour.

## Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time

Publisher: **Ubi Soft**  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Cart save**



Scattering the Sands of Time around an ancient Arabian palace isn't the best of ideas, especially when it unleashes the spawn of evil throughout the place and forces you to go on a whirlwind clean-up tour. We could have told you that was going to happen.

Anyway, like the classic *Prince of Persia* games that have gone before, *Sands of Time* features some impressive character animation – even by today's standards – and the general level of graphical quality is great with flowing fabrics and ancient carvings adorning the walls.

As you progress through the levels, leaping, climbing and shimmying your way around, you'll collect a number of scrolls, each teaching you a new trick. The Prince's neatest party piece is an ability to rewind time. This is very handy if you plummet to your death, get duffed up by an enemy, or fail to put a fiver on that 20-1 shot at Kempton. Sadly, in practice we found that we didn't use it half as much as we probably should, but it's a clever addition.

Even without the small innovations, *Prince of Persia* is a solid and enjoyable platformer with a touch of teamwork thrown in for good measure. The puzzles can be fiendishly tricky and leave you scratching your noggin for inspiration. It's well paced and fun, and you'd be well advised to check it out.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

85%

## Gladius

Publisher: **Activision**  
Release date: **Nov 21st**  
Price: **£39.99**  
Players: **1**  
Memory Card: **40 blocks**



This magazine, well, it's not a copy of *Tedious Strategy Game Monthly*, is it? So *Gladius* won't fancy its chances here. Quite right too, since we never ever want to look at this again.

It's Roman times and there's fighting to be done, plus a cheesy story to be told. But this is strategic fighting, so not like *Soul Calibur II* where you wade in and bosh-bosh-bosh with a big sword. Here you have little icons that you place on the people you want to hit. There's a golf game-style attack meter – hitting it at the top is best. 'Ha, Centurion! I've dealt you six points of damage! See the number rise from your head?'

Yawn. It's even worse when there are crates in the arena and everyone's trying to climb on top of them for a tactical advantage. Seriously, it looks like a B.C. version of musical chairs. It's tactical we suppose, but not thrilling. Not at all.



TURKEY  
OF THE MONTH



NOM UK'S  
RATING

51%

## Star Wars: Flight of the Falcon

Publisher: **THQ**  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£19.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Password**



The plan was clearly to produce *Rogue Squadron* in handheld form. You've got X-Wings and TIE fighters warring in space, but it doesn't really work out. Sorry people, you done bad.

Level one is you in the Millennium Falcon. TIEs fly into parts of the screen where the game doesn't let you shoot and you have to take down tons without dying even once.

Next up, you're slap bang in the sandy wastes of Tatooine. But this Mos Eisley stage is just chunks of brown hurtling towards you. You feel like a fly circling around some Weetabix. We hate to say this, but it's bad. Very bad.

The Death Star run sort of looks like the film, we suppose – providing you were watching an extremely ropy pirate version and looking through the bottom of a pint glass. There's a side-scrolling hidden bonus shooter in here as well, but that's so laughably bad we can't talk about it.

Overall, *Flight of the Falcon* is little better than average. Something simpler would have been better, a bit like the old *Super Star Wars* games on Super NES.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

58%



### The Return of the King

Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Release date: Out now  
Price: £29.99  
Players: 1-4  
Game Save: Cart Save



■ Kill enemies. Move on to the next area. Collect one in millions of items. Kill more enemies. Move on again. New room, more enemies, more collectibles. Can you see a pattern?

To a fan of games like *Gauntlet*, these activities will sound like great fun, chomping up hours of your life as you wander around cave after cave, hacking the guts out of dozens of trolls and finding yet another magic stone, enchanted sword or whatever.

The levels in *Return of the King* are designed for co-operative play and there is a four-player link-up mode (multiple packs needed), so you can battle through with mates. But if you play on your own, you'll have to make do with a computer-controlled character instead. So, it's even more like *Gauntlet* than before.

Is this your bag? It'll need to be if you're thinking of giving *Return of the King* a go. If not, the repetitive hacking and slashing will give you sore fingers, night sweats, blisters and RSI, a bit like the GameCube version. Still, at least the movie's going to be sweet-as.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

74%

### The Hobbit

Publisher: Vivendi Universal  
Release date: Out now  
Price: £39.99  
Players: 1  
Memory Card: 41 blocks



■ All games should start this way. You press Start a few times and you're straight into a bloodbath. Hack away at the knights, run around with a magic blue sword, it's got everything you need. And then Bilbo wakes up. And he awakens from his bloody dream into a sedate *Zelda* wannabee.

The world is lovely, but can't the stupid little hairbag get a move on? Bilbo: RUN. Run fast. Stop padding around like I've got all day. Oh look! Some kids want to play hide and seek. Where have I seen that before? Chickens wandering about. Is this Hyrule? No, it's Hobbiton. And while it's a pleasant enough place, it all seems a bit low-rent and pointless after *The Wind Waker*. Like *Zelda* for skinflints.

There's more thought involved than in EA's gorgeous-but-dumb *LOTR* slashers, at least there seems some purpose to this other than causing carnage on a mass scale, but people who've read the book (can't remember what it's called) might wonder if they missed the bit where Bilbo goes looking for silver coins and lost knitting needles.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

72%

### Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004

Publisher: Electronic Arts  
Release date: Nov 21st  
Price: £29.99  
Players: 1-2  
Game Save: Cart save



■ It's never going to live up to its bigger brother, the most sublime golfing experience you'll find, but unlike last year's tired effort *Tiger Woods 2004* is cool.

The main reason for such a vast improvement is the inclusion of an analogue-yet-digital-style swing, just like the one in the home console version. While it takes some getting used to, it's far more favourable than the old power bar.

There are eight tournaments to play through as well as the Scenario mode to test your links skills. It's graphically sound too with lush fairways and inviting bunkers, although once you get in and around the greens things get a bit blurry and the animation is sluggish.

Another good point to this handheld incarnation is the difficulty level; it's much harder and more challenging, requiring much more accuracy and skill to get a low-scoring round. Sadly, chipping onto the green is difficult to the point of frustration.

If you can't bear to be parted from *Tiger* for more than a few hours, get it. It's not far off the home version and is certainly better than last year's attempt. Warning: *Mario Golf* on GBA will most likely kill it.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

84%



## Fifa 2004

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1-2**  
Game Save: **Cart Save**



**FIFA 2004** hurts your left thumb. That's because of the constant pressure you must apply to the D-pad to keep your players tracking the ball. Apart from the mild pain and the risk of arthritis in future years it's good fun, if a little bit easy.

It doesn't have the same compliment of teams as the GameCube version, but there's still a reasonable amount of sides to choose from, including the all-important English Premiership.

You can play through league and cup scenarios and alter your starting line-ups and formations. The on-field action is pretty good and the camera angle allows a good view of the pitch. Graphically it's not overly impressive, but it makes up for that in the gameplay department.

Like past *FIFA* titles it is reasonably easy to score and to dispossess your opponents. The easy controls mean that you can whip out impressive pieces of skill, leave the defenders looking like mugs before you wallop the ball into the top corner.

*FIFA 2004* is a definite contender for best GBA football title. That is until some clever soul decides to release *Sensible World of Soccer* (please!).



NOM UK'S  
RATING

81%

## Dragon Ball Z: Budokai

Publisher: **Atari**  
Release date: **Out now**  
Price: **£39.99**  
Players: **1-2**  
Game Save: **2 blocks**



**Dragon Ball Z: Budokai** If you're a massive *Dragon Ball* fan you'll wet your pants at just the thought of playing as Goku or any of the clan in a *Dragon Ball* game. But we wouldn't tell you to sprint to the shops and blow 40 quid on this.

This is a basic fighter that, when compared to the complexity and sheer excellence of *Soul Calibur II*, is put to shame. You can pretty much button-bash yourself to victory, with the odd dodging manoeuvre here and there. Some combos can only be pulled off when you have the sufficient number of Ki Gauges, charged up by hitting your foe, but this is about as deep as the *Dragon Ball* experience gets.

You can earn new techniques as you go through the Story mode, which you can then assign to your character, or swap with friends.

It's fast-paced and playable action, good for your younger brother and there's a refreshing variety in some of the levels that offer more than simple fighting, but any hardcore gamer will turn their nose up at this one. We did enjoy the Japanese dialogue, though.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

61%

## Quidditch World Cup

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**  
Release date: **Nov 21st**  
Price: **£29.99**  
Players: **1**  
Game Save: **Cart save**



**Quidditch World Cup** is basically like a game of rugby on hovering broomsticks. Instead of a ball, you play with a Quaffle and try to score by throwing it into one of three hoops on the opposition's side of the pitch. Suspend disbelief before reading on.

Passing and shooting is fairly simple, and scoring is, if anything, a bit too easy — you can repeat one easy manoeuvre to score every time.

Goals are worth ten points each and at the end of the game the team who catch the runaway Snitch get 150 points. But that means you could have scored 14 goals more than your opponent and still lose at the end. So, what's the point in playing Quidditch? They might as well skip that part and get straight onto the Snitch chase then try to hit first base with Hermione.

The hovering players can sometimes make it tough to judge your position on the pitch — awkward when the Quaffle is out in the open. In *FIFA 2004* on GBA, players run on the floor which is good for judging their positioning, the skills are better and the game isn't decided by chasing an insect. That makes a lot more sense to us. But then, football always does.



NOM UK'S  
RATING

69%



# "No! Like this!"

You've bought them now tell us how you'd change 'em.

**What's your verdict?**

## Soul Calibur II

Is it the killer fighter we claimed, or just turd?

■ Why did Namco change the difficulty level in the PAL version? Now it's twice as easy to beat the game!  
Chris Elrick, *NOM UK forum*

■ The worst bit would be the slight slowdown. I would have added move lists for assassin and more work on the arenas. It isn't the best Ninty fighter ever, *Killer*



*Instinct on the Super NES is. Anon, NOM UK forum*

■ This is too easy. I got more of a challenge from the previous two *Soul* games from Namco. When I played this after *Virtua Fighter 4 Evo*, it's obvious that *SCII* doesn't come close to being great.  
David Bryan, *NOM UK forum*

■ Why did they assign the C-Stick to do the same as pressing two buttons at once. Just because it's there doesn't mean it has to be used in every game – especially this one.  
Charles Scott, *NOM UK forum*

■ I was so disappointed with

*Soul Calibur II* when I finished Weapon Master mode – it was way too easy. Make it loads tougher next time, or else!  
Andrew Douglas, Glasgow

■ I'm don't think it's the best fighter ever – I still think *Street Fighter II Turbo* is the best. There should be more ways to link a combo.  
Lestyn Evans, *NOM UK forum*

■ Why didn't the GameCube version have Roy and Marth as well as Link. Now that would've been cool!  
Chris Harriott, *NOM UK forum*

### ■ Tiger Woods

It's golf. It's just another bloody golf game, that's all. Why can't they introduce some variety, like a killing mode or 'smash as many of grandpa's windows as you can' mode?

Sam Naef, *NOM UK forum*



**"If the length was doubled and the battle system was improved, *Star Fox Adventures* would be one of the best games ever. Here's hoping!"**

James Stock, Norwich

### ■ Metroid Prime

Scanning just gets boring! If you want to unlock all the picture galleries you have to scan every boss, every piece of Chozo Lore and every bit of pirate data. I'm hoping that in *Metroid Prime 2* you won't have to scan everything, just to take full advantage of the game.  
Lucas Gillon, via email

### ■ Madden NFL 2004

I'd improve it by not bothering to release it. Same old thing, year after year.  
Jonathan West, *NOM UK forum*



### ■ Eternal Darkness

The fights suck! All you can do is swing one way or the other – it should have more depth to it. If ever there's going to be a sequel there should also be more stuff than just swords and guns.  
John Seabrook, via email

### ■ Wario World

With just four different types of enemies there's no challenge and the camera doesn't let you see enough of the level. I finished the game in about ten hours, so next time I want more advanced levels, some better camera angles – that way it might be something!  
Darren Stilwell, Gosport



Email your improvements to the latest GameCube games to **tim.street@emap.com**  
Remember, thumbs up or down doesn't cut it. We want to know how you'd make them better.





**“Banjo Kazooie’s really good, but really short. Can we have a longer version next time, please?”**

Alex Blackstock, London

■ How can people complain about *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire*? This is *Pokémon* as it always should have been; bright and colourful. You really get a sense of the different regions of Hoenn, everything’s so vivid and alive. I think most of the new *Pokémon* are great, not all of them are of course, but some of the old ones weren’t so clever either. Stop moaning, people, *Ruby* and *Sapphire* are awesome.

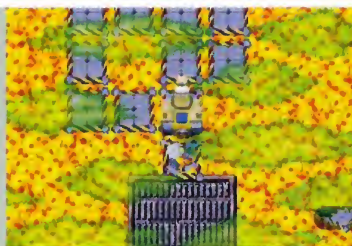
Daniel Weekes, Hereford

■ I didn’t think I would really like *Pokémon* games, but I borrowed *Sapphire* from a mate who had finished it and I have to say that I was pretty impressed. I reckon the GBA can do better graphics-wise, just look at *Golden Sun*, but as far as gameplay goes, *Sapphire* is pretty spot on. I enjoyed almost every minute of it and now I’m looking forward to the next instalment.

Ben Thompson, Swansea

■ I thought *Pokémon Ruby* was absolutely excellent! It was a real shame that they cut out some of the coolest things that were in *Pokémon Silver* and *Pokémon Gold*, though. I hope the next *Pokémon* game I play will bring back night and day, and phone numbers. They were really cool.

Angela Williams, via email



### **Banjo Kazooie: Grunty’s Revenge**

■ I knew Rare would come through for the Nintendo gamers. This is pure class. The minute I turned it on I was reminded of the classic N64 games that I know and love so well. The camera angle took a bit of getting used to, but the adventure was pure gaming genius.

Brian Dowler, Hastings

■ This is just not what I was expecting at all. I was initially enchanted with the whole atmosphere of *Grunty’s Revenge*, it felt like the old N64 games, but it was way too easy and I felt it lacked imagination. I got really sick of collecting stuff and then before too long I’d got to the end. This is worth borrowing, but not worth buying. No way.

Simon Everly, Warrington

■ *Banjo Kazooie: Grunty’s Revenge* was good while it lasted but it was over far too quick. It still has that Rare magic, which sort of makes me annoyed that they’ve defected to Microsoft, but if it continues to make games this short then Xbox owners are welcome to it. It was great to see them back on a Nintendo console, though.

Dean Francis, Stoke

**“I think that the battle system in *Golden Sun* still needs work, but the rest of the game is near perfect. Why isn’t there an RPG like this on GameCube?”**

Pete Walsh, Pembrokeshire

### **Golden Sun: The Lost Age**

■ I’m still nowhere near completing this, it’s simply brilliant. I can’t believe that they’ve managed to create a whole new *Golden Sun* world without losing any of the atmosphere from the first adventure. It feels like a sequel, but at the same time like a new game. Respect to Camelot. Bring on *Golden Sun 3*.

Dave Andersen, Stockport

■ I’m going to play this over and over until I’ve experienced every inch of it. I didn’t think that *Golden Sun* could be improved upon, but Camelot has done it again with this second instalment. I can’t think of any way that this can be improved upon. It’s about as perfect as a game can get.

David Hall, Perth



## **Super Mario Advance 4**

■ Now my collection is complete, Nintendo saved the best until last. *Mario Advance 4* is pure genius. It does feel a bit light compared to *Super Mario World*, but this came first and the power-ups are much cooler. My favourite’s the Raccoon suit. I wish Nintendo would add some new features, though.

Dan Nyninger, Wrexham

■ It’s still the best Mario game from the NES, but it feels a bit bare compared to *Mario World* and *Yoshi’s Island*. Nintendo was right to release it, but they should have released it first. I like the different suits you can collect and the level design is great, but it feels a bit short now.

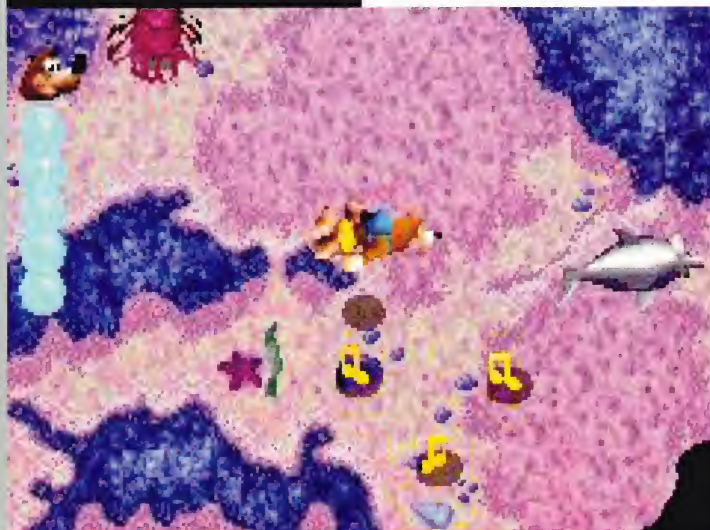
Wayne Harper, Bury St. Edmunds

■ Perfection. Just as good as I remembered it to be and it has lost none of the magic over the years. How sad it is that there have been no platformers since, except the Mario ones, that have equalled the genius on display in *Super Mario Bros. 3*. Why can’t modern developers create this sort of thing now?

Jean-Paul Samson, Norwich

■ *Mario Advance 4* isn’t as good as *Yoshi’s Island* or *Super Mario World* and I really hoped that Nintendo would have put some new mini-games in there instead of the same multiplayer game that we’ve been stuck with for the past two years. This is still brilliant, though.

Harry Knight, Melton Mowbray



Email your improvements to the latest GBA releases to Dom at [dominic.wint@emap.com](mailto:dominic.wint@emap.com). Remember, thumbs up or down doesn’t cut it. We want to know how you’d make them better.



# Masterclass

Busting the hardest parts

How to...

## Take out the toughest five bosses in Viewtiful Joe

This reworking of classic 2D action games is crammed with testing bosses. That was until now...

### I Fire Leo

DON'T ATTACK THE FIREBALLS

**DIFFICULTY RATING 5/5**

**Where...** The Magnificent Five  
**Its killer attacks are...** multiple flaming fireballs that fizz every which way, and a thump-and-stomp move that'll take half your life force.

**You'll get slaughtered if...** you don't immediately Fast Punch the molten rocks that lie on the walkway. They provide immunity to the fireballs, but only for a short time. Also, don't bother trying to take out the fireballs or jumping down the gap in the walkway.

**Easiest way to 'ave 'em...** is to get protection from the fireballs and get right next to him. Now Slow and Zoom, and hit him with a Red Hot One Hundred (RHOH) punch. This'll cause him to spin really fast. Use Slow again to catch a sight of him and deliver the same attack as before. Now he'll dive into the lava below and return with a ferocious salvo of fireballs. Fast Punch for protection and counter his charging move by double-jumping over him as he gets near. Then set about him with a RHOH. Repeat as necessary.





## JOE BLOWS

For what he lacks in height, Joe makes up for with his devastating set of moves and power-ups. Here are the five best tips for smooth brawling...



**Slow, Zoom, Hot One Hundred punch:** One hell of a mouthful, but this combo is without doubt the biggest hitter in the game.



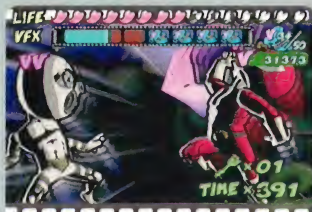
**Slow, Zoom, Hot One Hundred kick:** It renders Joe untouchable so it's great for multiple enemies.



**Buy the VFX Turbo Charger:** Get it from the Power Up shop – it'll fill your VFX Gauge quicker.



**Collect V-Film:** Collect film and the VFX Gauge will grow – Joe can then use his VFX for longer.



**Zoom In:** If you're surrounded by weaker enemies, Zoom In and your attacks will crush them.

## 2 King Blue

KEEP STILL DURING THE STORM

**DIFFICULTY RATING 4/5**

Where... After beating Fire Leo. Its killer attacks are... heat-seeking missiles and vertical bolts of lightning. You'll get slaughtered if... you try moving when he attacks with lightning. To survive, keep a cool head and don't move. If you don't take out the missile command tower, you'll suffer.

**Easiest way to 'ave 'em...** is to jump towards him, slowing as you draw alongside and use the Red Hot One Hundred attack. When the Die Fighters appear, double jump and Slow. Hang in the air as they fly by.



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Hit lots of enemies in one combo – you'll get extra V Points.



## 3 Alestor

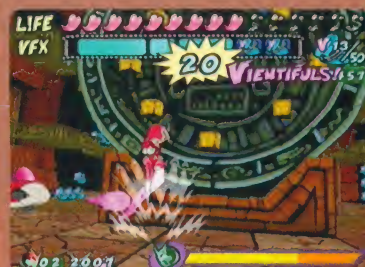
LET HIM COME TO YOU

**DIFFICULTY RATING 3/5**

Where... The Midnight Thunderboy. Its killer attacks are... an air-raid, swarms of lookalikes and lightning speed.

You'll get slaughtered if... you spend your time chasing his dopplegangers. It's better to pick a spot and wait for them. Take care to shelter from the falling bombs during his air-raid attack.

**Easiest way to 'ave 'em...** is to wait by the small platforms – use these to avoid the bombs. Don't attack his clones straight away – wait until they come towards you and Jump, Slow, Zoom and batter the kick button. You'll spin like a human saw and cut through all of them. Now drop to a platform and wait for Alestor. Turn towards him and Slow, Zoom and punch. Repeat the strategy until he's toast.





## 4 Gran Blue

WATCH OUT FOR HIS SNAPPING JAW

### DIFFICULTY RATING 2/5

**Where...** A Viewtiful Escape/The Magnificent Five  
**Its killer attacks are...** spitting deadly mines and snapping piranha fish right in your face. He'll also relentlessly chase you around, like a low-down dirty dawg.

**You'll get slaughtered if...** you don't realise that the sound of his gnashing teeth is your cue to get the hell out of the way – ignoring the piranha is always a stupid idea.

**Easiest way to 'ave 'em...** as with all these bosses, the trick is to get in close to the fiend, Slow and Zoom, and then either use punch or kick. In this case you need to finish him off as quickly as possible. To do this you'll need to hold punch and get stuck in.

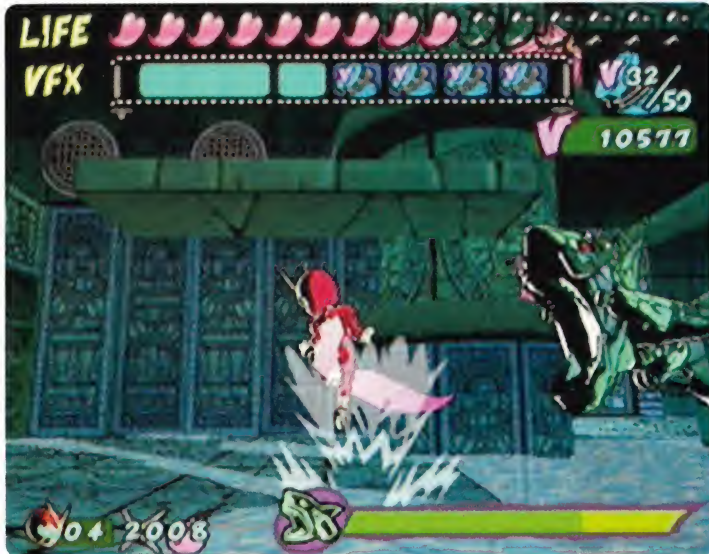
When he raises his head into the air he's either going to puke up mines or piranha, or start chasing after you. One routine follows the other, so you should be able to quickly get an idea of what he's about to do next. When he looks like he's about to chase you, use Fast to escape. Keep an eye on his position though, because when he finishes he's vulnerable to a Slow, Red Hot One Hundred.



**“The sound of his gnashing teeth is your cue to get the hell out of the way.”**







## 5 Hulk Davidson

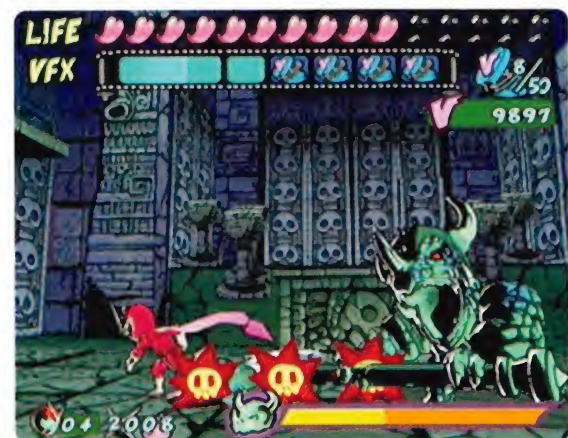
ATTACK ONCE HE'S THROWN THE AXE

**DIFFICULTY RATING 1/5**

**Where...** Some Like it Red Hot/The Magnificent Five  
**Its killer attacks are...** throwing a huge axe, heat-seeking missiles and a stomp move.

**You'll get slaughtered if...** you don't dodge when he comes crashing towards you, or keep an eye out for his close attack.  
**Easiest way to 'ave 'em...** is to notice his strict pattern. When he jumps towards you, dash towards him, so you swap places. Keep doing this until he throws his axe, at which point dash towards him and deliver a fast Hot One Hundred punch. Keep an eye on the axe and stop your attack when it's on its way back. If he sets off a cluster of missiles, move to the corner of the room and when they're near, use Slow.

Now punch them away at your leisure, hopefully towards Hulk. He'll now revert to his first attack, so follow the same counter-attack and keep an eye out for his lunging attacks.





## Bend it like Beckham

HOW TO...

**have their keeper on the rack**

**Tired of hitting row Z? Follow our guide to FIFA free kicks and ripple the net with ease.**

Goalkeepers are a lazy bunch. And ugly, too. Most of the time they'd rather have a fag while the real work goes on up field. They're also usually stupid or

mad, or both. And they smell. Do not respect them. They are your enemy. Follow our guide, though, and you'll have them on the run.



### Swerve School

The perfect free kick is an exquisite balance of power and swerve. It either leaves the keeper grasping at thin air as the net bulges behind him, or cannons in off a post with that oh-so-sweet wooden crack of success.

You need to properly gauge your power and swerve, depending on your distance from the goal. But be careful, the more power you use, the less the ball will swerve in the air. And you should always try to hit the sweet spot on the power bar, even though miss-hit shots will sometimes find the net.





## The Casual Bender

HOW HARD? 

**WHAT IS IT?** A mixture of pace and spin, this will rarely fail to test the tubby bloke between the sticks. In your mouth, fat lad.

**WHERE CAN I DO IT?** Pretty much anywhere from 18-30 yards out and a wide variety of angles.

**HOW DO I DO IT?** Place your target just inside the stantion, giving the ball some room to swerve away from the keeper's despairing lunge. Now put backspin and left or right hand side on the ball, but not too much – you don't want it to swerve beyond the post. The perfect power is just below two thirds.



## The Cheeky Chappy

HOW HARD? 

**WHAT IS IT?** A saucy, swerving chip, this is one to leave the keeper embarrassed as it ricochets in off the underside of the bar, leaving him rooted to the spot, his face covered in the yoke of your footballing skillz.

**WHERE CAN I DO IT?** From a range of about 18 to 25 yards out and fairly straight on to goal.

**HOW DO I DO IT?** Aim high, just below the crossbar and a good distance left or right of the keeper. Now put a lot of backspin on the ball and a touch of left or right hand side if you like. Don't blast it, you only want just over half power, allowing the ball to dip and swerve.



## The Swing King

HOW HARD? 

**WHAT IS IT?** The classic in-swinging free kick, this deadly beast tricks the keeper by appearing to head for the hot dog stand in the car park, before nipping back in at the last second.

**WHERE CAN I DO IT?** About 18 to 25 yards from goal and quite straight on.

**HOW DO I DO IT?** Target the top-left or top-right corner and, depending on which corner of the onion bag you're aiming for, put a lot of side and backspin on the ball. You won't need a huge amount of power, just over half way is best.



## The Bazooka Ball

HOW HARD? 

**WHAT IS IT?** A style popularised by mullet-haired power-houses, it's a rarity to score one, but you may have some luck tapping in a rebound past the shell-shocked netter.

**WHERE CAN I DO IT?** Anywhere from 18 to 35 yards out and from whatever angle you like.

**HOW DO I DO IT?** Aim fairly low down into either corner – this allows you to use lots of power and not see the ball reach orbit. Now put a lot of left or right hand side spin on the ball so that it goes around the wall. Finally, you can hit this very hard – but not in the red – and make sure you hit the sweet spot or you'll look like Diego Forlán (i.e. stupid).





## Link's hit list

Master the Hyrule hero in *Soul Calibur II*.



● This special look at Link's moves has been provided in association with piggyback. A more complete solution and further details can be found in the 246-page *Complete Official Guide* available from piggyback, priced at £9.99 and available in all video game retail outlets now.  
● A 12-page *Soul Calibur II* download and the *Soul Calibur II* official competition can be found at [www.authorisedcollection.com](http://www.authorisedcollection.com). Check it out!



Special Move	Entry	Attack level	Damage	Notes
Horizontal Slash	A	H (high)	13	Cancel with B
Horizontal Slash ~ Spin Attack	A	H, H, H	13, 18, 22	Possible to hold, at maximum: unblockable from second attack onwards. The longer you keep A pressed the greater the number of spin attacks. Possible to hold: damage 13, 18, 10, 22. At maximum hold: damage 13, 18, 10, 10, 30
Double Sword Slash (Horizontal)	A A	H, H	13, 13	A Hold A to shift to Boomerang Stance position
Cross Slash	A Y	H, Middle (M)	13, 17	A Y + Y to shift to Bomb Stance position
Cross Slash Combo	A Y A	H, M, H	13, 17, 22	A Y Hold Y to shift to Bomb Stance position. Delay of third attack possible
Step-in Attack Combo	→ A A	H, Low (L)	22, 25	Delay of second attack possible
Step-in Attack Upper Combo	→ A A Y	H, M	22, 38	Second attack can be aborted with B
Bat Swing	→ → A	M	38	—
Shoelace Slash	↘ A	L	25	—
Counter Slash	← A	H	27	← hold A to shift to Boomerang Stance position. As a Counterattack: lurch
Sword Trip	↗ A	L	29	As a Counterattack: flies away
Crouching Slash	↓ A	Semi-M	17	—
Cyclone Attack	↖ or ↑ or ↗ A	M	40	Possible to hold, at maximum: further attacks with damage 43, 24, 16
Spin Attack	↓ ↗ ← A	H, H	18, 22	Possible to hold, at maximum: unblockable. The longer you hold A, the greater the number of spin attacks: damage either 18, 10, 22 or (at maximum): 18, 10, 10, 30
Vertical Slash	Y	M	16	Cancel with B. Hold Y to shift to Bow Stance position
Double Sword Slash (Vertical)	Y Y	M, M	16, 21	—
Slash Kick Combo	Y Y	M, M	16, 16	—
Sword Sweep	tap A	M	30	Automatic Guard Impact against horizontal attacks
Sword Sweep ~ Spin Attack	tap hold A	M, H, H	30, 18, 22	Automatic Guard Impact against horizontal attacks. Possible to hold, at maximum: unblockable from second attack onwards. The longer you hold A, the greater the number of spin attacks: damage either 30, 18, 10, 22 or (at maximum): 30, 18, 10, 10, 30
Stab	→ Y	M	23	—
Illusion Stab Combo	→ Y quickly one after the other	M, H, M, SM, H, Semi-M, M	23, 5 x 5, 23	—
Running Hack	→ → Y	M	42	In SC1: Guard Break. As a Counterattack: bounce off ground
Half-Moon Swipe	↘ Y	M	27	↘ hold Y to shift to Bow Stance
Double Spin Slash	→ Y A	M, H	23, 31	Possible to hold second attack, at maximum: damage 46
Power Thrust	→ → Y	M	30	Possible to hold to shift to Bow Stance position. At maximum: Guard Break, damage 40 and in SC3 unblockable
Down Slash	↘ Y	M	17	—
Sword Plant	↓ Y	M, M	40	If second attack hits, Y inflicts a further mid hit (damage 17)
Running Spin Splash	→ → tap A	M	48	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 58
Rocket Stab	↖ or ↑ or ↗ Y	M	28	—
Kick	Y	H	12	Cancel with B. Hold Y to shift to Bomb Stance position
Front Kick	→ Y	H	25	→ hold Y to shift to Bomb Stance position. As a Counterattack: stagger
Mid Kick	↘ Y	M	20	As a Counterattack: flies away
Low Kick	↓ Y	L	11	—
Double Kick	↘ Y Y	L, H	16, 28	As a Counterattack: flattened
Kick Out	→ Y	M	20	—
Hyper Dash Attack	→ ← Y + Y	M, M	25, 40	Second attack: Guard Break. Possible to hold, at maximum: unblockable and further attacks (damage 25, 25, 40). Cancel with B
Crouching Slash	While crouching A	Semi-M	13	—
Crouching High Slash	While crouching Y	M	18	—
Crouching Low Kick	While crouching Y	L	11	—
Rising Horizontal Slash	While getting up A	M	32	Hold A while getting up to shift to Boomerang Stance position
Rising High Slash	While getting up Y	M	20	—



	Special Move	Entry	Attack level	Damage	Notes
Bow Stance	Leaping Split Combo	While getting up  	M, M	26, 32	If second attack hits,  inflicts a further hit (damage 17). If first attack hits as a Counterattack: flies away
	Turning Horizontal Slash	Back facing opponent 	M	23	—
	Turning Vertical Slash	Back facing opponent 	M	33	—
	Turning Kick	Back facing opponent 	M	19	—
	Crouch Turn Slash	While crouching, back facing opponent 	M	16	—
	Crouch Turn Vertical Slash	While crouching, back facing opponent 	M	28	—
	Crouch Turn Kick	While crouching, back facing opponent 	M	12	—
	Jump Slash	Hold  Jump 	H	35	Jump with  : damage 30
	Leap Strike	Hold  Jump 	M	45	—
	Jump Kick	Jump 	H	22	Jump with  : opponent doesn't fall over
Bomb Stance	Landing Crouch Slash	Jump (delayed) 	L	24	—
	Landing High Slash	Jump (delayed) 	M	34	—
	Landing Kick Combo	Jump (delayed)  	L, H	18, 28	If first attack hits as a Counterattack: flattened
	Bow Stance	 + 	Special	—	Use analogue stick to move
	~Boomerang Stance	During Bow Stance 	Special	—	—
	Bow	During Bow Stance 	H	40	Guard Break.  +  : Hold  for unblockable: damage 60
	Bow (High)	During Bow Stance  	H	45	Guard Break
	Bow (Low)	During Bow Stance  	L	29	—
	~Bomb Stance	During Bow Stance 	Special	—	—
	Bomb Stance	 + 	Special	—	Use analogue stick to move. If the bomb is not thrown, the explosion causes damage 60 to the character
Boomerang Stance	~Boomerang Stance	During Bomb Stance 	Special	—	—
	~Bow Stance	During Bomb Stance 	Special	—	—
	Bomb	During Bomb Stance 	M	34 (11)	unblockable in so far as the bomb is only thrown at the last moment: damage 52 by explosion and damage 17 by bouncing off the ground
	Boomerang Stance	 + 	Special	—	—
	Boomerang	During Boomerang Stance 	H, H	25, 15	With  +  or  +  to change direction of the throw
	~Bow Stance	During Boomerang Stance 	Special	—	—
	~Bomb Stance	During Boomerang Stance 	Special	—	—
	Forward Roll	  	Special	—	—
	Force Counter Slash	During Forward Roll 	M	30	As a Counterattack: stagger
	Rocket Stab	During Forward Roll 	M	38	—
Forward/Side Roll	Leaping Split Kick Combo	During Forward Roll  	M, M	26, 32	If second attack hits,  inflicts a further mid hit (damage 17). If the first attack hits as a Counterattack: flies away
	Side Roll	During Forward Roll  or 	Special	—	—
	Side Roll Slash (right)	During Side Roll (right) 	H	36	—
	Side Roll Slash (left)	During Side Roll (left) 	H	36	—
	Rocket Stab	During Side Roll 	M	38	—
	Leaping Split Kick Combo	During Side Roll  	M, M	26, 32	If second attack hits,  inflicts a further mid hit (damage 17). If the first attack hits as a Counterattack: flies away
	Back Somersault	  	Special	—	—
	Force Counter Slash	During Back Somersault 	M	30	As a Counterattack: stagger
	Leap Strike	During Back Somersault 	M	45	In SC1: Guard Break
	Knee Thrust	During Back Somersault 	M	27	As a Counterattack: flies away
8 Way Run	Bat Swing	 	M	38	—
	Running Hack	 	M	42	In SC1: Guard Break. As a Counterattack: bounce off ground
	Sliding		L	25	—
	Link Spin Slash	 tap  	H	48	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 58
	Bow Stance	  + 	SP	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
	Bomb Stance	  + 	SP	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
	Boomerang Stance	  + 	SP	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
	Swing Under	  + 	Throw	25	Escape with  . As a Counterattack: stagger



Special Move	Entry	Attack level	Damage	Notes
Force Counter Slash		M	30	As a Counterattack: flies away
Running Hack		M	42	In SC1: Guard Break. As a Counterattack: bounce off ground
Running Spin Slash		H	48	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 58
Knee Thrust		M	27	—
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Force Counter Slash		M	30	—
Running Hack		M	42	In SC1: Guard Break. As a Counterattack: bounce off ground
Running Spin Slash		H	48	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 58
Knee Thrust		M	27	—
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Spinning Leap Strike		H	36	—
High Launcher		M	32	hold  to shift to Bow Stance position
Propeller Kick		H	24	hold  to shift to Bomb Stance position.   to shift to Forward Roll position.   to shift to Back Somersault position
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Spinning Leap Strike		H	36	—
High Launcher		M	32	hold  to shift to Bow Stance position
Propeller Kick		H	24	hold  to shift to Bomb Stance position.   to shift to Forward Roll position.   to shift to Back Somersault position
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Grass Cutter		L	30	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 40
Grass Cutter High Feint		M	38	First attack is a feint, second attack is a hit
Sword Chop		M	30	—
Knee Thrust		M	27	—
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Grass Cutter		L	30	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 40
Grass Cutter High Feint		M	38	First attack is a feint, second attack is a hit
Sword Chop		M	30	—
Knee Thrust		M	27	—
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Counter Slash		H	27	to shift to Boomerang Stance position. As a Counterattack: lurch
Power Thrust		M	30	Possible to hold, at maximum: damage 40, Guard Break and stagger. At maximum and SC3: unblockable. Continue to press B to shift to Bow Stance position
Somersault		Special	—	Shifts to Back Somersault position
Bow Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bow Stance position
Bomb Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Bomb Stance position
Boomerang Stance		Special	—	Shifts to Boomerang Stance position
Arm Twist		Throw	50	Escape with
Running Slash		Throw	55	Escape with
Piggyback Throw	On opponent's left or	Throw	58	Escape with  or  depending on which Throw is entered
Power Roll	On opponent's right or	Throw	65	Escape with  or  depending on which Throw is entered
Shield Shove	Behind opponent or	Throw	48	No escape possible (except for Voldo and Astaroth)
Swing Under		Throw	25	—
Landing Crouch Slash	Wall Jump	L	24	—
Landing High Slash	Wall Jump	M	34	—
Landing Kick Combo	Wall Jump	L, H	18, 28	If first attack hits as a Counterattack: flattened

8 Way Run

Throws

Wall Jump



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Hitman 2: Silent Assassin  
Italian Job: L.A. Heist  
James Bond: Nightfire

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Luigi's Mansion  
Matrix (Enter the)  
Medal of Honor Frontline  
Metroid Prime  
Minority Report  
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.  
NBA Street Volume 2  
PGA Tour 2004  
Phantasy Star Online  
Pikmin  
Reign Of Fire  
Resident Evil 0, 1, 2&3  
Rogue Leader  
Rogue S. III: Rebel Strike\*  
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights  
Simpsons: Hit and Run  
Sims  
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle  
Sonic Adventure DX  
Sonic Mega Collection  
Spiderman  
Spy Hunter  
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter  
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2  
**Star Wars: R. Leader**  
Starfox Adventures  
Super Mario Sunshine  
Super Monkey Ball  
**Super Smash Br. Melee**  
The Return of the King\*  
The Simpsons: Hit & Run  
The Sims  
Tiger Woods Golf '04  
Time Splitters 2  
Tony Hawk's 3 & 4  
Tony Hawk's Underground  
T. Crime Streets of LA  
Turok: Evolution  
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# The Great NOM UK Challenge

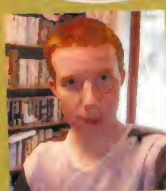
Have you got what it takes to top the table? This is the place to show off your skills, game ninjas. So what are you waiting for?

NOM UK is watching

**CHEAT!**  
• NO MESSING ABOUT  
• NO IMPORT GAMES  
• NO CHEAT DISCS

No prizes for guessing which challenge was your favourite this month – *Soul Calibur II*'s Survival mode wins with both its bloody hands tied behind its back. In fact it was so popular that we've decided to set another *Soul Calibur II* tester for you this month.

There are over four (five) other new challenges, too – including two to commemorate the triumphant return of *Mario Kart*. But sadly it seems no-one wants to break the mail-sorting record. We're so disappointed in you lot...



## SOUL CALIBUR II

**Name:** John Zeepvat  
**Score:** 50 wins in 10'56"64  
**What happened?** Slavering, game monkey, John Zeepvat, continues his climb to the top of the NOM UK challenges tree this month with a score of such

staggering prowess, we were left wondering if his hands are normal. We asked a 'doctor' and were told that young Zeepvat has little suckers on his fingers that let him grip a gamepad for longer, as well as climbing up wall and hanging under bridges.

John used Seung Mina: "I have a kind of tactic where I can do massive damage with minimal risk of being hit. Not gonna tell you how though. Basically it works in around five seconds, up until the tenth stage – after that it slows by about five seconds every ten fighters due to blocking. Good luck working out how to do it!" Thanks John, that's, umm... really helpful.

John's closest rival was Steve(n) Dunlop, using Maxi, who racked up a not-quite-as-impressive 48 kills in 24'20"12. He might have won, but Zeepvat hit him in the mouth with a banana on the 49th round. You don't see those Soldiers of Mist lobbing fruit at each other just to get a result, do you? There's no honour amongst Cubemasters it seems...

Rank	Character	Wins	Time	Player Name
1st	SEUNG MINA	50	10'56"64	SEUNG M
2nd	VOLD	7	2'01"78	VOLD
3rd	TAKI	3	1'19"92	TAKI
4th	RAPHAEL	3	20'07"65	RAPHA
5th	TALIM	3	21'07"65	TALIM
6th	CASSANDRA	3	22'07"65	CASSAN
7th	YUNSUNG	3	23'07"65	YUNSU
8th	MITSURUGI	3	24'07"65	MITSUR
9th	NIGHTMARE	3	27'07"65	NIGHTM
10th	KILIK	2	28'07"65	KILIK

## NEW CHALLENGE



## TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004

**Name:** Dom  
**Score:** 4975  
**What happened?** "See how many reviews are in this issue?! I had to write every single one, because everyone else was playing Mario Kart. Even the ones with Mike or Dean at the end

were actually done by me; and Kingsley's no help because he only like games that are as old as he is. It's alright though, because I get to relax with *Tiger Woods*. This is all about accuracy and skill – so anyone who likes girly cartoon racers can stick their mushroom where the sun don't shine."



## SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

**Name:** Jack Thompson  
**Score:** 3,332.6m  
**Talk us through it:** Another fiercely contested challenge, with Jack Thompson proving he's got the most welly of the lot. Here's how he did it: "I used Ganondorf for this, using a lot of his charged attacks to really build up the sandbag's damage meter." After *Soul Calibur II* and *Zelda*, SSBM always gets the most entries. Here's a thought – if you lot love SSBM so much, why don't you marry it?!





Make sure you get your entries to us by Nov 22nd if you want to be in next month's NOM UK

# BEAT THIS!

**Soul Calibur II**, Survival mode.  
John Zeepvat; 50 wins, 10'56"64.

**Pikmin**, grow the most Pikmin, Challenge mode, Impact Site. Dave Every; 232.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Mario Kart: Double Dash!!**, Time Trial, Waluigi Stadium, 7 laps: Mike, 2:03:538

**Super Monkey Ball**, Monkey Target, ten-round match. Arman Faghini, 13,240.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Mario Kart: Double Dash!!**, Time Trial, Peach Beach, 7 laps. Tim; 1:19:830

**Burnout**, three laps of the Interstate course. Jono Bird; 6:38.783.

**Super Monkey Ball**, score on Advanced level. Mark Puddifoot; 694,400.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader**, Battle of Hoth. Kingsley; 3:59.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Soul Calibur II**, Quickest time on Arcade mode, Easy setting. Dom; 3'21"83.

**Metroid Prime**, Space Station, most time left after evac. Dean Hailstone, 4:12.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Tiger Woods 2004**, Scenarios mode, SZ Challenge 1 (targets). Dom; 4975.

**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4**, Campus level, single combo. Arif Jetha, 11,309,832

**Super Smash Bros. Melee**, Home Run Contest, Jack Thompson, 3,332.6m

**Wind Waker**, mail-sorting. Dave Every, John Zeepvat and Dean Hailstone, 33 letters.

NEW CHALLENGE

**Star Wars Rebel Strike: Rogue Squadron III**, Raid at Bakura. Kingsley; 8:27.



## MARIO KART

Name: Mike  
Score: 2:03:538  
Got some advice? "When Double Dash turned up at

the office I got so excited that I was sent home in a rubber ambulance. The don of all driving games is back! Take a photo of the Records screen or we'll think you're cheating."

NEW CHALLENGE

RECORDS

TIME TOTALS	BEST LAP	RETURN
WALUIGI STADIUM	0:39:741	MIC
2:03:538	MIC	
2:05:987	MIC	
2:06:222	MIC	
2:28:059	SIU	
--:--:--	--	

NEW CHALLENGE

RECORDS

TIME TOTALS	BEST LAP	RETURN
PEACH BEACH	0:26:861	MIC
7:19:830	MIC	
7:20:683	MIC	
7:27:732	MIC	
7:22:977	MIC	
7:24:858	MIC	



## MARIO KART

Name: Mike  
Score: 1:19:830  
Tell us about it: "Compared to the karts in Double Dash,

my car is really boring. Last week, I tried chucking a tortoise out of the window at Tim's Alfa, but it missed and hit an old lady". Then the police came."

\*No tortoises or old ladies were harmed by NOM UK.



## SUPER MONKEY BALL

Name: Mark Puddifoot  
Score: 694,400  
What happened?

"Use Baby to get a better view of the 0.1 path and use all the warp stages (even floor 11's), plus get the time bonuses." We don't get that, but maybe that's because you're using secret monkey words.

ADVANCED MODE

RANKING

1st	MAK	30	0642400
2nd	MAK	30	0671387
3rd	MAK	30	0642400
4th	MAK	30	0608287
5th	MAK	30	0606792

ADVANCED MODE

RAID AT BAKURA

MISSION COMPLETE

Completion time	8:27	8:30
Enemies destroyed	25	30
Shot accuracy	0	0
Attentions not	0	0
Lives lost in orbit	0	0
Targeting computer efficiency	100%	100%

SILVER MEDAL AWARDED  
6 POINTS EARNED  
YOU HAVE 12 POINTS



## STAR WARS: REBEL STRIKE

Name: Kingsley  
Score: 8:27  
Any info? "If I had a pound

for every time I've seen Star Wars I'd have about 32 quid. That's not nearly enough to get 'I love Leia' tattoo removed from my backside, though. Oh dear..."

## What to do now...

If you've bettered one of the scores on our leader board we want to hear all about it – but you'll need to get some evidence of your score (a photo of your TV is best) and send it along to us if you want to get famous.

But that's not all – we want to find out where you did it, when you did it and how you did it. Make sure it's interesting, because if you've top-scored you'll be featured here, so you'll want to include a good quality photo of

yourself as well (if it's a digital pic, please provide a fairly hi-res version). And if you think there's a game that deserves to be in our list, just drop us a line at the usual address.

Send your top scores to The Great NOM Challenge, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW or email them to kingsley.singleton@emap.com and he'll reply with a nice email telling you he's got your high score. From there it gets fed into NOM UK's Mother Brain and churned out as the lovely pages you see before you. Well that's what Kingsley hopes, anyway.





# Game Selector



We've played every game here. Some we loved, some we loathed, but we rated them all, god damn it. And we did it for you guys, because we're professionals.

## GC Section

Bought a game? Was it rubbish? Don't do it again...

S = Surround PLII = Pro Logic II

Title	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Memory	Dolby	Tips
18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker	37%	117	£39.99	1-2	3	—	117
2002 FIFA World Cup	28%	118	£39.99	1-4	4	S	120
Ace Golf	72%	123	£29.99	1-4	5	—	—
Aggressive Inline	79%	121	£39.99	1-2	57	—	121
ATV 2	83%	126	£39.99	1-2	27	—	126
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	77%	128	£39.99	1-2	30	—	131
Barbarian	53%	121	£39.99	1-4	3	—	—
Batman Dark Tomorrow	25%	129	£39.99	1	3	PLII	—
Batman Vengeance	50%	116	£39.99	1	2	—	—
Beach Spikers	84%	121	£39.99	1-4	3	—	121
Big Air Freestyle	69%	125	£39.99	1-2	3	—	—
Big Muiha Truckers	71%	131	£19.99	1	12	—	131
Bionicle: The Game	51%	134	£39.99	1	5	—	—
Black & Bruised	75%	130	£39.99	1-2	1	—	131
Blood Omen 2	62%	125	£39.99	1	1	PLII	125, 126
BloodRayne	57%	130	£39.99	1	1	—	—
Bloody Roar Extreme	78%	116	£39.99	1-2	3	—	124
BMX XXX	59%	124	£39.99	1-2	18	—	125
Bomberman Generation	65%	123	£39.99	1-4	3	—	—
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds	81%	134	£39.99	1-4	3	—	—
Burnout	85%	116	£39.99	1-2	4	S	—
<b>Burnout 2: Point of Impact</b> 	<b>90%</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>PLII</b>	<b>130, 132</b>
Capcom Vs. SNK 2 EO	76%	120	£39.99	1-2	2	—	125
Casper: Spirit Dimensions	39%	126	£29.99	1	3	—	—
Castleween	35%	129	£19.99	1	1	—	—
Cel Damage	62%	116	£39.99	1-4	2	—	116
Conflict Desert Storm	80%	128	£39.99	1-4	8	—	—
Conflict Desert Storm II	84%	134	£39.99	1-4	12	—	—
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex	68%	123	£39.99	1	2	—	—
Crazy Taxi	80%	116	£39.99	1	8	—	116, 117, 131
Dakar 2	72%	128	£39.99	1-2	7	—	—
Dark Summit	45%	117	£39.99	1-4	4	—	—
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	66%	116	£39.99	1-2	4-13	—	—
Dead to Rights	83%	130	£39.99	1	10	—	132
Defender	62%	127	£39.99	1-2	1	PLII	—
Def Jam Vendetta	85%	129	£39.99	1-4	2	—	130
Die Hard Vendetta	74%	123	£39.99	1	6	—	125, 127
Disney Sports Basketball	38%	129	£39.99	1-4	15	—	—
Disney Sports Football	73%	123	£39.99	1-4	15	—	—
Disney Sports Skateboarding	40%	128	£39.99	1-2	7	—	—
Disney's Extreme Skate Adventure	51%	133	£39.99	1-2	9	—	—
Disney's Magical Mirror Starring Mickey Mouse	55%	121	£39.99	1	3	—	—
Disney's Party	24%	134	£39.99	1-4	1	no	—
Disney's Tarzan Freeride	60%	116	£39.99	1	8	—	—



S = Surround T PLII = Pro Logic II								
	Title	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Memory	Dolby	Tips
	Donald Duck Quack Attack	52%	117	£39.99	1	6	—	—
	Doshin The Giant	66%	122	£39.99	1	40	—	123
	Driven	62%	116	£39.99	1-2	5	—	—
	Eggo Mania	80%	121	£29.99	1-2	3	—	—
	Enter the Matrix	64%	130	£39.99	1-2	10	—	130, 132
	ESPN International Winter Sports 2002	59%	117	£39.99	1-2	3	—	—
	<b>Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem</b> 	<b>92%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>PLII</b>	<b>122, 123, 128, 131</b>
	Evolution Skateboarding	72%	126	£39.99	1-2	27	PLII	126
	Evolution Snowboarding	54%	127	£39.99	1-2	2	—	—
	F1 2002	70%	118	£39.99	1-4	4	—	—
	F1 Career Challenge	74%	130	£39.99	1-4	5	—	—
	FIFA 2003	83%	122	£19.99 	1-4	52	—	—
	Finding Nemo	64%	133	£39.99	1	1	—	—
	Fireblade	69%	125	£39.99	1	2	—	—
	Freedom Fighters	88%	134	£39.99	1-4	4	—	135
	Freekstyle	80%	121	£39.99	1-4	2	PLII	122
	Frogger Beyond	62%	128	£39.99	1	3	—	—
	<b>F-Zero GX</b> 	<b>92%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1-4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>133, 134, 135</b>
	Gauntlet Dark Legacy	52%	121	£39.99	1-4	8	—	121
	Godzilla DAMM	75%	125	£39.99	1-4	2	PLII	125
	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	76%	124	£44.99	1	4	—	128
	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	88%	131	£39.99	1	59	—	131
	Hot Wheels Velocity X	58%	125	£29.99	1-4	1	—	126
	The Hulk	57%	131	£39.99	1	3	—	131, 132
	Ikaruga	84%	128	£39.99	1-2	4	—	129, 130
	ISS 2	74%	116	£39.99	1-4	5	—	123
	ISS 3	51%	129	£39.99	1-4	59	—	—
	The Italian Job: LA Heist	62%	133	£39.99	1-2	2	—	—
	James Bond 007 In... Agent Under Fire	76%	118	£44.99	1-4	3	—	119, 120, 131
	James Bond 007 Nightfire	81%	124	£19.99 	1-4	2	—	125
	Jeremy McGrath Supercross World	48%	118	£39.99	1-2	3	—	118, 119
	Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	73%	121	£39.99	1-2	14	PLII	—
	Knockout Kings 2003	66%	123	£39.99	1-2	5	—	—
	Legends of Wrestling	44%	117	£39.99	1-4	5	—	120
	Legends of Wrestling II	49%	125	£39.99	1-4	12	—	—
	<b>The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker</b> 	<b>96%</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>PLII</b>	<b>129, 130, 131</b>
	Lego Drome Racers	55%	133	£39.99	1-4	4	—	—
	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	76%	127	£39.99	1	4	—	127, 128
	Lost Kingdoms	77%	119	£39.99	1-2	2	S	123
	Lost Kingdoms II	81%	129	£39.99	1-2	3	—	—
	Luigi's Mansion	85%	116	£19.99 	1	3	PLII	116, 117, 118, 125
	Madden NFL 2003	89%	121	£39.99	1-2	59	S	121
	<b>Madden NFL 2004</b> 	<b>90%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1-4</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>
	Mario Party 4	80%	123	£19.99 	1-4	2	S	—
	Mary-Kate and Ashley: Sweet 16 Lcsd to Drive	53%	126	£29.99	1-4	4	—	—
	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	80%	123	£39.99	1-8	18	—	122, 126
	Medal of Honor Frontline	81%	123	£19.99	1-4	4	—	124, 129
	Mega Man Network Transmission	74%	131	£39.99	1	1	—	131
	Men in Black II: Alien Escape	52%	126	£39.99	1	3	—	—
	Micro Machines	71%	126	£39.99	1-4	4	—	—



		S = Surround    PLII = Pro Logic II						
	Title	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Memory	Dolby	Tips
	<b>Metroid Prime</b> 	<b>95%</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>£19.99</b> 	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>PLII</b>	<b>127, 129</b>
	Minority Report	58%	125	£39.99	1-4	2	PLII	126
	Monsters, Inc. Scream Arena	39%	127	£29.99	1-4	4	—	127
	Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	84%	125	£39.99	1-2	1	—	125, 128
	MX Superfly	71%	121	£39.99	1-2	8	—	122
	Mystic Heroes	65%	123	£39.99	1-4	6	—	—
	NBA 2K3	76%	127	£39.99	1-4	52	—	127
	NBA Courtside	82%	117	£39.99	1-4	7	—	120
	NBA Live 2003	55%	123	£39.99	1-2	57	—	—
	NBA Street Vol. 2	83%	129	£39.99	1-4	7	—	130
	Need For Speed Hot Pursuit 2	74%	122	£39.99	1-2	7	PLII	124
	NFL 2K3	82%	127	£39.99	1-4	56	—	127
	NHL 2003	67%	121	£39.99	1-4	3	—	—
	NHL 2004	49%	133	£39.99	1-4	28	—	—
	NHL 2K3	74%	128	£39.99	1-2	104	—	—
	NHL Hitz 20-02	75%	116	£39.99	1-4	8	—	117, 119
	NHL Hitz 20-03	78%	122	£39.99	1-4	8	—	—
	Outlaw Golf	70%	128	£39.99	1-4	5	—	131
	Pac-Man World 2	74%	126	£39.99	1	16	—	127
	Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II	85%	127	£39.99	1-4	7	PLII	128
	Pikmin	88%	118	£19.99 	1	4	—	118, 119, 130
	P.N.03	56%	132	£39.99	1	5	—	—
	Pro Rally	62%	122	£39.99	1-4	3	PLII	—
	Pro Tennis WTA Tour	58%	122	£39.99	1-4	5	—	—
	Rally Championship	71%	126	£29.99	1-4	6	—	—
	Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	87%	126	£39.99	1-4	8	PLII	—
	Red Card	83%	119	£39.99	1-2	12	—	120
	Red Faction II	81%	129	£39.99	1-4	7	—	130
	Reign of Fire	54%	124	£39.99	1	3	PLII	—
	Resident Evil 2	69%	129	£29.99	1	1	—	131
	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	73%	129	£29.99	1	1	—	—
	Resident Evil	88%	120	£44.99	1	8	—	120, 121, 123, 128
	Resident Evil Zero	86%	126	£44.99	1	9	—	126, 127
	Robotech Battlecry	56%	125	£39.99	1-2	1	—	126
	Rocket Power: Beach Bandits	31%	123	£29.99	1-2	10	—	—
	<b>Rocky</b> 	<b>90%</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1-16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>125</b>
	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	45%	123	£39.99	1	5	—	—
	Sega Soccer Slam	81%	122	£39.99	1-4	5	—	123
	Shrek: Extra Large	40%	126	£39.99	1	1	—	—
	The Simpsons Road Rage	54%	117	£39.99	1-2	4	—	117, 118, 119
	The Sims	78%	129	£39.99	1	60	—	129, 130
	Skies of Arcadia Legends	82%	129	£39.99	1	3	—	—
	Smuggler's Run: Warzones	80%	122	£39.99	1-4	6	—	—
	Sonic Mega Collection	84%	127	£39.99	1-2	2	—	127, 128
	Sonic Adventure 2 Battle	62%	116	£19.99 	1-2	3	—	116, 125
	Sonic Adventure DX Director's Cut	71%	130	£39.99	1	9	—	—
	Speed Kings	68%	130	£39.99	1-2	2	—	—
	<b>Soul Calibur II</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>£39.99</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>PLII</b>	<b>133, 134, 135</b>
	Spider-Man	75%	118	£39.99	1	2	S	118, 119, 122
	SpyHunter	78%	117	£39.99	1-2	2	—	118
	Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly	58%	124	£39.99	1	8	—	—



S = Surround    PLII = Pro Logic II								
	Title	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Memory	Dolby	Tips
	SSX Tricky	77%	118	£44.99	1-2	5	S	120
	Star Fox Adventures	84%	123	£19.99	1	3	PLII	124-129
	Star Wars Bounty Hunter	78%	125	£39.99	1	2	PLII	125
	Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast	84%	123	£39.99	1-2	3	—	125, 129
	Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II	88%	116	£44.99	1	3	PLII	117-119, 122, 128
	Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike	89%	134	£39.99	1-2	5	PLII	—
	Star Wars The Clone Wars	77%	123	£39.99	1-4	3	PLII	124
	Summoner: A Goddess Reborn	74%	127	£39.99	1	19	—	—
	Superman: Shadow of Apokolips	36%	128	£39.99	1	4	—	—
	Super Bubble Pop	32%	127	£39.99	1-2	1	—	—
	Super Bust-A-Move All Stars	78%	134	£19.99	1-4	1	—	—
	<b>Super Mario Sunshine</b> 	93%	121	£19.99	1	7	PLII	121, 124, 126, 128, 130
	<b>Super Monkey Ball</b> 	92%	116	£44.99	1-4	3	PLII	116, 117
	<b>Super Monkey Ball 2</b> 	90%	126	£39.99	1-4	2	PLII	126, 128-130
	<b>Super Smash Bros. Melee</b> 	90%	117	£19.99	1-4	3	—	119-121, 125, 129
	SX Superstar	70%	131	£19.99	1-2	3	—	—
	Taz Wanted	47%	122	£39.99	1-2	2	—	—
	Tetris Worlds	46%	122	£29.99	1-4	8	—	—
	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	89%	124	£39.99	1-4	32	—	124
	<b>Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004</b> 	90%	133	£39.99	1-4	40	—	134
	<b>TimeSplitters 2</b> 	92%	122	£44.99	1-4	2	—	122-124, 128, 130
	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	59%	127	£39.99	1-2	17	—	—
	<b>Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell</b> 	92%	129	£39.99	1	17	—	129, 130, 131
	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	88%	116	£44.99	1-2	6-8	S	116, 117, 129, 131
	<b>Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4</b> 	90%	123	£39.99	1-2	7	PLII	126, 127
	Top Angler Real Bass Fishing	69%	128	£39.99	1	3	—	—
	Top Gun Combat Zones	71%	121	£39.99	1-4	3	—	122
	Turok Evolution	67%	122	£39.99	1-4	3	PLII	122
	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	75%	123	£39.99	1	1	—	127
	UFC Throwdown	58%	121	£39.99	1-4	5	—	122
	Universal Studios Theme Parks Adventure	11%	116	£44.99	1-2	3	—	—
	Vexx	72%	128	£39.99	1	2	PLII	—
	<b>Viewtiful Joe</b> 	93%	134	£39.99	1	4	—	135
	Virtua Striker 3 Ver. 2002	40%	118	£39.99	1-2	2	S	120
	V-Rally 3	71%	130	£39.99	1-4	158	—	131
	Wallace & Gromit in Project Zoo	67%	133	£39.99	1	4	—	—
	Wario World	75%	131	£39.99	1	10	—	132
	Wave Race Blue Storm	88%	116	£39.99	1-4	12	PLII	116, 118
	Worms Blast	70%	117	£39.99	1-2	3	—	—
	Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions	68%	124	£39.99	1-2	19	—	125
	WWE Crush Hour	56%	129	£19.99	1-2	2	—	—
	WWE Wrestlemania X8	67%	122	£39.99	1-4	12	—	122, 124
	WWE Wrestlemania XIX	87%	132	£39.99	1-4	20	—	—
	XGIII Extreme G Racing	81%	117	£39.99	1-4	3	—	117-119
	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	68%	129	£39.99	1	4	—	—



S = Surround PLII = Pro Logic II

Title	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Memory	Dolby	Tips
X-Men Next Dimension	61%	125	£39.99	1-2	3	—	126
Zoo Cube	71%	120	£39.99	1-4	2	—	121

## GBA Section

Only the best of the best get in.

Name	Score	Issue	RRP	Players	Tips
Advance Wars	95%	110	£29.99	1-4	114, 115, 121
Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising	93%	133	£29.99	1-4	133, 134
Breath of Fire II	92%	118	£29.99	1	120
Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow	90%	129	£29.99	1-2	130
Crash Bandicoot XS	90%	116	£29.99	1	—
Denki Blocks	90%	111	£29.99	1-4	—
Ecks Vs Sever	91%	111	£29.99	1-4	113
ESPN International Winter Sports	90%	113	£29.99	1-4	—
Golden Sun	93%	114	£29.99	1-2	115, 117, 118, 120, 121, 123, 124
Konami Krazy Racers	90%	106	£29.99	1-4	111
The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (inc. Four Swords)	96%	127	£29.99	1-4	127-129
Mario Kart Super Circuit	92%	109	£29.99	1-4	109, 111-113, 115
Metroid Fusion	93%	124	£29.99	1	126, 127, 130
Ninja Cop	89%	132	£29.99	1	—
Pokémon Ruby and Pokémon Sapphire	93%	131	£34.99	1-4	131, 133, 134
Rayman Advance	90%	106	£29.99	1-4	109, 112
Sonic Advance	90%	115	£29.99	1-2	115
Super Mario Advance	91%	106	£29.99	1-4	107-109, 111-113, 115
Super Mario Bros. 3: Super Mario Advance 4	92%	133	£29.99	1-2	134
Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2	93%	115	£29.99	1-4	115, 119
Super Monkey Ball Jr	90%	127	£29.99	1-4	127, 128
Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival	90%	111	£29.99	1-4	112
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	92%	123	£29.99	1	—
V-Rally 3	91%	118	£29.99	1-4	—
Wario Ware Inc.: Minigame Mania	93%	129	£29.99	1-2	—
Yoshi's Island: Super Mario Advance 3	94%	123	£29.99	1	124, 125, 128

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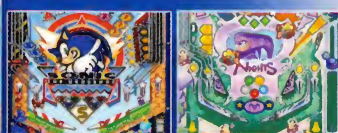
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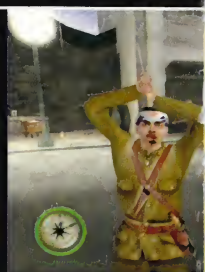


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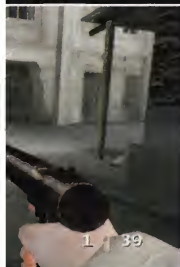
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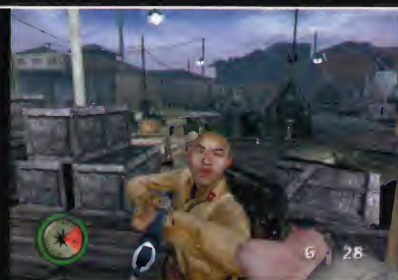
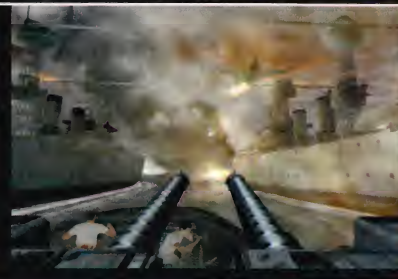
**MORE  
NEXT  
MONTH!**



## Medal of Honor: Rising Sun

Since blowing us away at E3, we haven't seen anything of EA's Pearl Harbor shooter – now that's good camouflage. Usually we celebrate anything that comes from Japan, but in this game our oriental friends are the enemy. Hopefully none of them will turn out to be Miyamoto's great grandfather, or one stray round might see us erased from history.

As you can see, *Rising Sun* looks great – a massive kick on from the bland graphics of *Frontline*. Expect the level of intensity you felt on Omaha Beach to stay more or less constant in the new game and an even more immersive story line. Seriously, within a few seconds of pressing start you're thrust into the heat of the action. Hope you're ready, soldier.





## 2-3 MONTHS

### Judge Dredd: Dredd vs Death

Remember when *Judge Dredd* used to be big? No? Well, he's a futuristic police dude and his game's looking gory as all freaking flip. Kill, kill! Spray the blood! FPS games aren't exactly a rare breed, but we're up for anything that basically tries to drown us in guts. Bring it on!



### Prince of Persia

Despite slipping into next year, *PoP* remains one of our most anticipated titles. It looks lush and the level of control over the Prince is amazing, with context-sensitive controls making the sword fights rock. The way the camera angle can be shifted from chasing the Prince into a problem-solving top-down view is also a joy to behold. We want it here now.



### Beyond Good & Evil

The name Jade isn't just synonymous with a *Big Brother* slapper, it also has heroic connotations. Well, the girl in this game is called Jade and it looks like being another cracker from Ubi Soft. The control is fluid in this third-person action game and the marvellous alien worlds are straight from the warped imagination of the man behind *Rayman*.

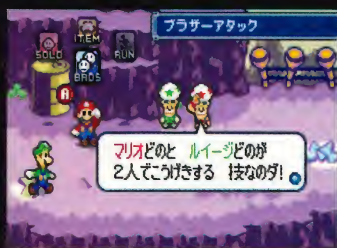
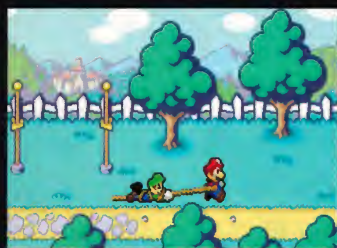




# 6 MONTHS

## Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga

It'll be great. Mario and his brother on a Saga holiday, getting frisky with the old folks and having colostomy bags fitted. Actually, it'll be great for reasons other than those lies we just made up. It'll be great because the two previous games in this series, *Super Mario RPG* and *Paper Mario*, are absolutely mint. Expect boring RPG systems to be given a new lease of life and far more platform game-style interactivity than you usually get. The one thing it won't be is boring. Rockin' good news!



## Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories

When Walt Disney and Samuel M. Squaresoft were young, they vowed to team up for a Game Boy Advance RPG—just as soon as games got invented. Here, they deliver on that ancient pact. Like *Mario & Luigi*, it's a lot more interactive than the likes of *Golden Sun*. It's also chock full of Disney characters, but they're kind of B-grade. Like the *Duck Tales* boys. Oh, right.



## Donkey Kong

We have already got three of these bad boys on order. Namco's rhythm-action *Donkey Kong* game is an absolute blast to play, as you bash the bongo controller and clap like a loon. We've loved rhythm games in the past, but none are as instinctive as this. Or as mind-hurtlingly bizarre.





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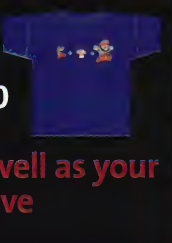

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# Your Mail



**Want a nice Mega Bucket to satisfy your aching belly? Well get writing in to us and you could be on the receiving end of a bumper bundle of Colonel Sanders' goodies. Runners-up receive smaller, but no less tasty, prizes.**

## RUNNER-UP

### Donkey wrong

I was excited when I heard a new *Donkey Kong* game was on the way but now I don't really care. I'm sure a lot of people will agree with me when I say that the next game in the DK series should have been a platformer. A great inventive and different game yes, but a drum-beating game? That's just plain stupid! Bringing this game out will be the biggest mistake that Nintendo could make. It won't sell because it's cheap and lazy and it won't do any good to GameCube's image. Please put us out of our misery and tell us it's all a big joke?  
*Thomas Gordon, Ballymagroarty*  
Maybe you should apply for a job at Nintendo's development house. You can mark your application 'Zero Imagination'.

### Enter the Darkness

*Eternal Darkness* is such a missed opportunity for gamers. It's a brilliant game and yet it isn't selling, even at £15. I bought a copy and it is amazing. If you see a copy for that price, buy it. Remember it was *NOM UK*'s fifth best-ever GameCube game.  
*Peter Curtis, Tonbridge*  
It's a classic. If you've got the spare cash you could do a lot worse than get this game.

## RUNNER-UP

### You nana!

While I was in Los Angeles I bought a banana. Not an ordinary banana; a Dole banana like the ones you see in *Monkey Ball*. I thought that was cool so I took a picture of it.  
*Max Almquist, Northwich*  
Excellent work, Max. All nana photos are greatly appreciated.



### Pay to play

I think that if Nintendo is going to sell more titles that are short like *Pikmin* or *Luigi's Mansion* they should base the prices on the length of games. For example I wasn't going to pay for *Pikmin* priced at £39.99 even though I wanted to play it and even when it dropped to £20 I still wasn't sure as you'd said it was too short. Finally I saw it priced at £14 and decided to buy it. I finished it and then felt it was a good game and that I hadn't been cheated out of my money. Maybe I'm being tight, but it's something to consider.  
*Gareth Illidge, Pontefract*  
Let's be honest, that's never going to happen is it? It'd be like admitting that a game was too short.

### You can't have both

Your mag is great, but there's just one problem: you're getting too harsh on scoring games. In general, you do quite well, but why the hell didn't you score *Resident Evil*, *Pikmin*, *Luigi's Mansion*, *Resident Evil Zero*, *Star Fox Adventures* and *Mario Party 4* all 90% or more so they are Nintendo Classics? And yet you scored *Madden NFL 2004* 90% when it's just a crappy

## RUNNER-UP

### NOM UK breaks into America

This year I went to LA for my holidays just after E3 was over. I think that my issue 130 is the most travelled issue in the UK. I took it 14,000 miles spanning Las Vegas, Yosemite National Park, the Grand Canyon, Hoover Dam, the Golden Gate Bridge and Death Valley in Nevada, where I threw a stone off the valley for each *NOM UK* team member. Except Dom, I mean why waste a good stone? Here's a snapshot to prove that I was there.  
*Andrew Clements, Co. Londonderry*  
Dom says: I know where you live, Andrew.



sim of a game that no-one in the UK cares about. You're supposed to be the UK's OFFICIAL Nintendo mag! I mean come on, even some of the unofficial mags are scoring games higher than you are, because the games are good.  
*Rob Cooper, via email*  
For years we've been accused of bias, finally the tide has turned. We like to think we're harsh but fair. The reason your selections didn't score above 90% is because they're not good enough.

### In a word

Would *Soul Calibur II* have got 94% if Link hadn't featured in it? An honest yes or no, please.  
*Manoj Pandya, London*  
No.

### Warning for Nintendo Europe

Just so you would know, I, Scott Bass, and my friend Jamie Reynold and lots of other people will be breaking into Nintendo of Europe. We'll be going on a trip to Germany in year nine. We'll use a grappling hook to get to the roof, climb down a main air duct and use fake 'game tester' badges to play all the secret games.  
*Scott Bass, via e-mail*  
Thanks for the advance warning, Scott. We'll pass it on to the lads in Germany.

## TURNER-UP

### Turning Japanese

Ever since the GBA was released, it's been infested with remakes and re-releases. Some were good, some weren't. My main problem is, the only good re-release I've seen is *Megaman & Bass*. We most likely know that it was originally only in Japan for the Super NES, now it's here on our GBAs, translated into English and everything! If Nintendo (and any other companies) did

## Look what you did!

Listen, you can't have our jobs, no matter how hard you try, and no matter how much you attempt to impress us with your gifts and your bribes. You'll just have to set up your own magazine, like the one sent in by Edward and Maddie Stedman, Petula and Conrad Jeffries and Alexis Munro.

Packed to the gills with character profiles, game reviews and competitions, Nintendo Magazine would make the ideal coffee table companion. This issue even comes with a free mini GameCube model.



LETTER  
OF THE  
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- > email: nintendoletters@emap.com
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### RUNNER-UP



## Spotted!

In issue 132, Gary Billington asked if anyone could top Star Road. I was at my Grandma's house and remembered her road: Kirby Road. Kirby ain't the best character, but he's still cool. My Grandma must live in Dream Land.

Matthew Kershaw, Ipswich



### TEXT THE EDITOR

You can let us know how you feel about the world of Nintendo on a text! Tap in 'Txt', leave a space, add your message and send it to 84070. You must get permission from the bill payer before texting us as each text costs 25p to send. Every text sent to us can be viewed at [www.clubnom.com](http://www.clubnom.com) and here's just a small selection:

■ I'm so unlucky. I can't afford Soul Calibur 2.

■ I WANT TO BE NOMINATED 4 TURKEY OF THE MONTH. COS I LIKE TURKEY

■ I'm studying games computing at lincoln right now... My time is coming they should make a good 3D zelda game that is cool tell them plz

■ I AM A PROUD HARDCORE GAMER I think you should do a streets of rage for gba.



this more often, I'd be a happy bunny. I know it's hard to translate things, and yes, I know it's hard to program extra goodies into games, but please, re-release the rare/Japan-only games! Mark "Ragey" Johnston, via email

It's true that a lot of Super NES treasures are finding their way onto the GBA, along with some real stinkers that should never see the light of day. Maybe a scout through the Japanese archives would uncover some hidden gems.

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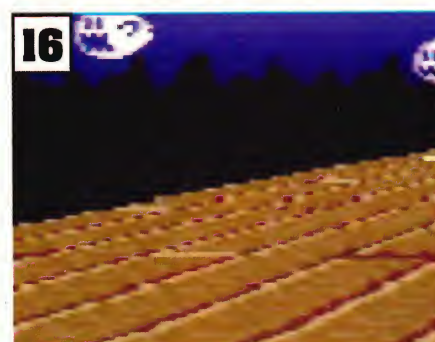
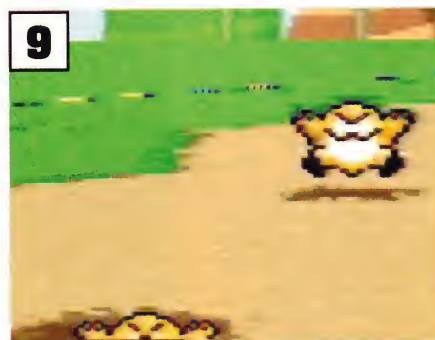
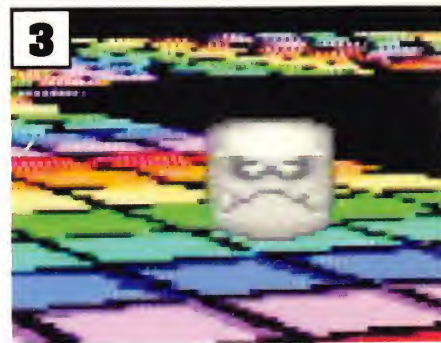
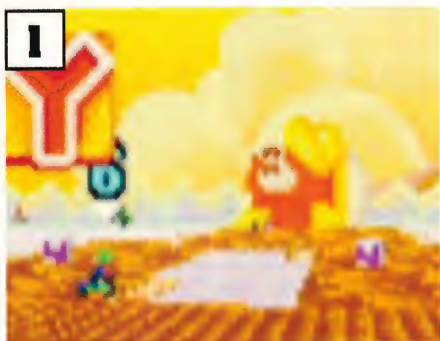
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# Name that Track

Get every course right and you'll be a games guru.\*



\*Confused? Scared? Want to cheat? The answers are on p6



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